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VOYAGES AND TRAVELS OF
MARCO POLO.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES
ABERYSTWYTH

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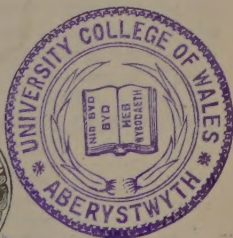
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VOYAGES AND TRAVELS

OF

MARCO POLO.



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1887.



INTRODUCTION.

MARCO POLO, born in the year 1254, belonged to a noble trading family in Venice. His father, Nicolo Polo, was led, with a brother Maffei, by the enterprise of trade, to visit the Crimea. Thence they went forward to Bokhara, and from Bokhara they were drawn to the coast of the great Emperor of China, Kubla Khan. Kubla ruled over the wide regions extending to the coasts of China, which had been conquered by the Tartar Genghis Khan and his immediate followers. It was Kubla Khan who had removed the seat of Tartar government to Cambaluc—that is, Pekin—which he enlarged and glorified. He had also a summer palace at Shangtu, as Coleridge sang—

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree ;
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enfolding-sunny spots of greenery.

Here or at Pekin the Great Khan received, in the father and uncle of Marco Polo, the first men from whom he heard descriptions of the civilisation and religion of the West. As means of strength for the new Eastern Empire, Kubla sent back the two Venetians as his envoys to the Pope, offering to

receive and support a body of men sent to him by the Pope as teachers of liberal arts and of Christianity. But when the brothers reached Venice again, the Pope was dead. Clement IV. died in 1269, and his successor, Gregory X., was not appointed until September, 1271. Nicolo Polo found also that his wife was dead. After staying in Venice for about two years, the brothers, Nicolo and Maffei, started again for the East; Nicolo taking with him his son Marco, then seventeen years old. Gregory X. had been appointed Pope at the time when they started, but in reply to the large invitation of Kubla to send to the East a company of civilisers in arts and religion, Pope Gregory X. sent only two Dominicans to teach theology; and even these men had not courage enough to complete the journey into China.

Young Marco Polo, in company with his father and his uncle, now travelled to Ormus, an island at the north side of the entrance of the Persian Gulf, formed of rock coloured with impregnations of salt, sulphur, iron, and copper, and about twelve miles round. It yields now only a revenue from its salt; but in and after Marco Polo's time it was the great meeting-place of traders between the West and East. Its trade was transferred afterwards to Gambroon, but its old wealth suggested Ormus to Milton when he painted, at the beginning of the second book of "Paradise Lost," the pomp of Satan,

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind;
Or where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.

Travelling East in search of the barbaric gold [it was Virgil who first gave it that adjective, *Æneid* II., 504] and failing to take ship at Ormus, as they first intended, the Polos went through Persia, reached the Hill Country of Badakhshan in Central Asia, where

young Marco, in the fresh air of the hills, and of the valleys through which flow some of the head streams of the Oxus, recovered from a long illness. Thence onward they passed through many regions, not described again until our own days, over the great desert of Gobi, which is 1,200 miles long by about 600 broad, to the north-west provinces of China. So in the spring of 1275 the two brothers had found their way back to Kubla Khan "in Xanadu," with the young Marco in their company.

If the brothers had not brought missionaries of civilisation to teach the East what was known in the West, they had brought in Marco Polo one quick-witted and observant youth, who studied languages and customs, and in all ways fitted himself to be the man who should first bring the East home to the West. Kubla Khan found him apt for his service, and appointed him, in 1277, a second-class commissioner attached to the Imperial Council. Young Marco Polo was sent presently by Kubla Khan upon a mission to Yunnan, the remotest province in South-western China, and he carried back those lively accounts of the various peoples over whom he ruled, in which he knew that Kubla found delight. The two elder Polos settled themselves in the sunshine of the Great Khan's favour, helping him as they could with suggestions for the application of convenient knowledge of the West to his own uses, while Marco's young energy was fully employed. He was sent again and again on distant missions, and at one time he was governor, for three years, of the city of Yangchow.

The Polos were not easily to be spared by their great patron, and their natural desire was to enjoy at home in Venice the fruits of their toil and enterprise. But in 1292, their aid as experienced travellers having been sought in taking safely to Tabreez a bride chosen among the Mongols for a Persian Khan, who was allied in blood to Kubla, Marco Polo, with his father and his

uncle, sailed from Chinchew. After two years of peril and adventure, in which many of their companions perished, they delivered the bride safely, but not to the royal bridegroom; for he was then dead, and she was married to his son. After this the Polos, having safely weathered every storm, went home.


In 1298 Marco Polo was among the prisoners taken by the Genoese in a victory at sea over the Venetians. He remained a prisoner of war till peace was made between the two republics in July of the next following year. During this year's imprisonment, Marco Polo was persuaded by a fellow captive, Rusticiano of Pisa, to amuse himself by telling through the story of his travels, that, as his friend told it, Rusticiano might shape all into a book. But for that sea-fight, and the defeat of Andrea Dandolo and the Venetian navy, Marco Polo and his travels might have left no more durable record than the memory of friends whose social hours he had enlivened.

Marco Polo, after his return from the East, married and had three daughters. Three years after the death of Dante, and three years before Sir John Mandeville set out upon his travels, Marco Polo died, at the age of seventy, in the year 1324.

Of the many varying texts of Marco Polo's travels, the oldest in Italian is translated from a French original. But the original record by Rusticiano of Pisa was, no doubt, written in Latin. Rusticiano began with his fellow prisoner's personal record, but went on to make the book in his own way from materials for which he drew upon his friend's experience.

What follows belongs to John Pinkerton's edition of Marco Polo, which is here reprinted.

H. M.



VOYAGES AND TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO,

*Who in the middle of the thirteenth century passed through a great part of Asia, all the Dominions of the Tartars, and returned home by sea through the islands of the East Indies.**

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is with ancient writers as with ancient coins, such as understand them value them above measure, while such as will not be at sufficient pains to examine them, not only despise them, but also such as admire them. Thus none are more governed by prejudice than those who declaim against it, and none greater bigots than such as are attached to their own opinions from a notion that they think freely. Yet this zeal for freedom of thought ought to be amended rather than discouraged, as being in itself commendable, though sometimes dangerous, by being misapplied. It may, and to say the truth, to many it does seem a tedious

* Taken chiefly from the accurate edition of Ramusio, compared with an original manuscript in His Prussian Majesty's library, and with most of the translations hitherto published.

and disagreeable labour to look so far back as the first springs and dawnings of knowledge; yet, however they may colour this with pretences to refined taste, it is in fact no better than an excuse for idleness, and a dislike to the taking those pains which are requisite to succeed in such inquiries.

The travels of Marco Polo are indeed very old, and are come into our hands with considerable defects, but they are very valuable for all that, and very well worthy of our attention. He was the Columbus of the East Indies, the first that gave a certain and distinct account of the sea beyond China, and of the free passage thereby through all the islands of the East Indies back into those countries that are very well known. It is true that a great part of what he related, though delivered with much solemnity, and confirmed by the strongest asseverations, was much called in question, and thought in some measure beyond all belief. But subsequent discoveries have banished this incredulity, and what were once esteemed fables have been since found true relations; and the discourses of Marco Polo, that were rejected by the supercilious wits of his own time, have been raked out of the dust of old libraries, deciphered, in a manner, from the barbarous Latin of monkish translators, and brought into the form we now have them by the indefatigable pains of the learned Ramusio; a man whose countenance alone might be sufficient to give credit to this or any other work; though from the notes we have added, it will appear that there are intrinsic marks of its value in the performance itself: yet we owe to

Ramusio the being able to discover these, and, therefore to him we willingly ascribe all glory that results from the vindication of this curious piece, and the honour of its illustrious author. To the same excellent person is due the account we have received of several particulars relating to the personal history of Marco Polo and his family, of which, in as few words as possible, we shall give the reader a relation; which, though not absolutely necessary to the understanding of the book, will be found useful and entertaining.

CHAPTER II.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.

SIGNIOR NICOLO POLO, the father of our author, and his brother Signior Maffio, began their travels from Constantinople in the year 1250, and having proceeded to the court of the Grand Khan of Tartary, resided there for many years, and returned, as the reader will see, to Venice about the year 1269, where they found the wife of Signior Nicolo deceased, and her son, of whom she was left big at the time of their departure, a well accomplished youth of nineteen years of age. Him they carried back with them to the court of the Khan, and after having spent twenty-six years more without any news being heard of them by their friends at Venice, returned safely thither in the year 1295. On their arrival at their own house in St. John Chrysistom's Street, they found themselves

in a strange situation, being not only worn entirely out of the memory of their family and acquaintance, but having lost, in a manner, the very tokens of their country, being become Tartars in their speech as well as their habit, and, therefore, under a necessity of taking some extraordinary steps to recover the respect and reverence due to them, by convincing the world that they were really noble Venetians, and the individual persons who had been so long lost to their country and friends.

It was with this view that they gave a magnificent entertainment to their relations, at which they all three came forth in rich suits of crimson satin; of which, when the guests were seated, they stripped themselves, and gave them to the servants; appearing next in crimson damask, these also they put off at the last service, and bestowed likewise on the servants, being then dressed in crimson velvet. When dinner was over, and all who waited withdrawn, Marco Polo brought out their coats of Tartarian cloth or felt, and out of their foldings produced an incredible quantity of rich jewels, among which there were some well known to those present, and which indisputably proved these strangers of the Polo family. Signior Maffio Polo became a worthy magistrate of Venice, and lived and died in peace.

As for our author Signior Marco, a few months after his return, the Genoese Admiral Lampa Doria coming with a fleet of seventy galleys to the island of Curzola, they fitted out from Venice, under the command of Andrea Dandolo, a great naval force, in which he had

the command of a galley, and was so unlucky as to be taken prisoner and carried to Genoa, where he remained in spite of all the offers that were made for his ransom several years; so that his father, despairing of his return, and desirous that his own offspring might inherit his riches, married a second time, and had three children. In the time of this imprisonment all the young nobility of Genoa resorted to our Marco to hear the recital of his voyages and adventures, which gave them so great satisfaction, that one of them prevailed upon him to send for his notes from Venice; and when thus assisted, wrote from his own mouth the following history in Latin; from whence it was translated into Italian; and this Italian was again translated into Latin, and abridged; whence grew that prodigious corruption so justly complained of in the first printed copies. This work of Marco's was supported by the testimony of his father, and by that of his uncle on his death-bed. At last Marco himself obtained his liberty, returned to Venice, married, and had two daughters, Moreta and Fantina,* but had no male issue. He died as he lived, beloved and admired by all who knew or conversed with him; for with the advantages of birth and fortune he was humble, and made no other use of his great interest in the state than to do good.

* There was another daughter named Bellela.

CHAPTER III.

THE SEVERAL EDITIONS OF THESE TRAVELS.

WE have already shown that this work was originally written in Latin, and if not by the author's hand, at least from his mouth; but after the Italian version that was made of it, the copies of the Latin manuscript became extremely rare, insomuch that the Italian translation was taken for the original. One Francis Pepin, a monk, translated it into Latin, and abridged it at the command of his superiors; and it is a copy of this manuscript that is in the library of the King of Prussia. It was printed at Basil by the care of the celebrated Reinecius, and afterwards in other places. It was from one of these copies that it was translated by Hakluyt, of which Purchas so heavily, and at the same time so justly, complains. Ramusio took a great deal of pains, as well in restoring the sense of the text of our author, as in justifying his character, and supporting the credit of his work by his learned discourses. He was assisted therein by a copy of the original Latin manuscript, which was lent him by his friend Signior Chisi, without which it had been impossible for him to have brought it into so good order as we now see it.

There has been, besides the translations already mentioned, at least two in the German language. It was printed in Portuguese at Lisbon in 1502, and it has been several times translated into Dutch. I have been the more particular in the account of these additions and translations because they differ very much from

each other ; so that the only way to come at a complete view of the author, is by collecting and comparing these ; a work of infinite pains and labour, in which, however, we have the assistance of Andrew Müller, a learned German critic, and of Peter Bergeron, a Frenchman, who, next to Ramusio, was, of all others, the most capable of such an undertaking, and has succeeded in it the best.

There was, however, one thing wanting, which was the justifying the dates, verifying the facts, and explaining the obscure names of places which occur in these travels ; and this we have done to the best of our ability in this translation, so that the reader may be satisfied that he has the work of this ancient writer as entire, and in as good condition as it was in our power to give it him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OBJECTIONS RAISED AGAINST THEM.

THERE have been abundance of objections raised against the credit and authority of this writer, many of which, as they were founded on the errors of transcribers and translators, are taken away by restoring our author's genuine sense, and therefore we need not mention them particularly ; but there are others which deserve more regard. It is said, that our author mentioned some countries and many places that were never heard of before or since. A shrewd objection this, inasmuch as it seems to represent all the pains that has

been taken about his writings as entirely thrown away. In answer to this we must observe, that he wrote according to the lights he received, and those lights were chiefly from the Tartars; whence it might very well happen that the names of places mentioned by him should appear strange and uncouth in this part of the world. But it so happens, that we have since received such helps as enable us to get pretty well clear of this difficulty; for though we have retained in the text the names used by our author, yet we have afforded, from the assistance given us by oriental writers, such explanations as remove, in every respect, these geographical obscurities, so as to leave no sort of doubt either as to the capacity, or the veracity, of Marco Polo.

Another charge against him is, that he does not agree with other writers, or rather other writers do not agree with him: but when examined to the bottom, this charge will not be found to have any great weight, as having chiefly arisen from the mistakes made as to the true sense of what this writer delivered; so that very often, what was imputed as ignorance to him, was, in fact, no more than temerity in those who pretended to find fault with them. The last, and, indeed, the greatest objection is, that he has related many things that are absurd, some that are incredible, and not a few that are impossible. Against this charge we cannot pretend to vindicate him, though much may be said to excuse him. The facts he tells us of his own knowledge are surprisingly verified by authentic and indisputable evidence; and grant that he might be

imposed upon in what he gives us on the authority of others, we must be content, the rather because it is our happiness to live in an age when men are less liable to be cheated and misled; therefore, this ought to make us the more ready to bear with failings in one who wanted this advantage, who lived in a time of darkness and obscurity, when credulity passeth for faith, and when consequently errors of this sort were rather a man's misfortune than his fault.

CHAPTER V.

THE OPINIONS OF SEVERAL EMINENT CRITICS.

IN spite, however, of all these charges, there have been some great men in all ages who have done justice to our author's merit. Among these we may reckon the famous Vossius in his account of the Latin historian, the great geographer Sebastian Munster, the learned naturalist Conrad Gesner, the accurate historian Leunclavius, the celebrated Joseph Scaliger, and many others. The learned German critic William Schickard, in his history of the Kings of Persia, gives our author this character: "Marco Polo, the Venetian, says he, is a very good writer, and those things which he reports, and were heretofore thought incredible, are now verified daily by later discoveries." But of all who have undertaken the cause of our author, none has done it with greater capacity, with more good will, or better success, than Father Martini, to whom we owe

the best description of China, and who was consequently a better judge than any other of the merit or demerit of this work. He assures us, that there is not the least reason to doubt the truth of our author's relations on account of the obscurity of the names of places; for, says he, he wrote them after the Tartar pronounciation, whereas later writers study to imitate as well as they are able the pronounciation of the Chinese.

I will add to these but one testimony more, which is that of an author very able to have detected him, if he had caught him in untruths, and who was far enough from being tender of men's reputations if he thought them to blame. The author I mean is *Athanasius Kircher*, who in his account of China, confesses, that none of the old authors have more fully or more accurately described the remotest countries of the east than *Marco Polo* has done; yet he readily admits, that there are many things in him so very dark, that they may be in a manner styled inexplicable; but then, with great good sense and candour, he attributes this to the author's want of skill in geography and astronomy; and if we consider how young he was when his father carried him into Tartary, and how little opportunity he had of acquiring that sort of knowledge that was most necessary for preventing those mistakes, we may easily concur in opinion with so many eminent and learned writers, that in consideration of the many curious and useful passages in his writings, these blemishes, especially as they were in a manner unavoidable, may very well be forgiven. After having

thus cleared the way, we will no longer detain the reader from the perusal of these travels, which their author has thus digested. He first gives a succinct account of his father's and uncle's peregrinations, and then of his own; after which, he enters into a more particular description of the countries and places through which they passed, and relates also such remarkable things as he was informed of in the course of his voyages.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT.

AT the time that Baldwin was Emperor of Constantinople, in the year of our Lord 1250, two gentlemen of the most illustrious family of Paolo or Polo, at Venice, embarked on board a vessel freighted with various kinds of merchandize on their own account; and having traversed the Mediterranean and the Bosphorus, they came with a fair wind, and the blessing of God, to Constantinople. There they continued for some time to repose themselves, and then crossing the Pontus Euxinus, arrived at a certain port called Soldadia, from whence they went to the court of a great Tartar prince, called Barha, to whom they showed the fine jewels they had brought, and presented him with some of the most valuable. That monarch was far from being ungrateful; he kindly accepted their presents, and in return gave them others of greater value. They remained a full year at his court, and then disposed all things for

their return to Venice. But before they had an opportunity of departing, there broke out a war between this Prince Barha and another Tartar king, whose name was Alan; and this dispute being decided by a battle, the army of Barha was defeated. This unlucky accident exceedingly embarrassed the Venetians, who knew not what measures to take, or how to get safely back into their own country. At length, however, they took a resolution of escaping, as well as they could, out of the country where they were, and by several by-roads escaped to a city called Guthacam, seated on the river Tygris. They continued their journey from hence through a great desert, where there were neither inhabitants nor villages, till at last they arrived at Bochara, a considerable city on the confines of Persia. It was, at the time of their arrival, the residence of a prince called Barach, in whose court, meeting with a good reception, and not knowing how otherwise to dispose of themselves, they remained three years. At that time a certain person of distinction was sent ambassador from the said Prince Alan to the Great Khan, who is the superior monarch of all the Tartars, residing in the remotest countries of the earth, betwixt the north-east and the east, called Cublai Khan; who coming to Bochara, and finding there these two brethren, who were now well versed in the Tartarian language, he rejoiced exceedingly, and persuaded these men to go with him to the great Emperor of the Tartars, knowing that he should gratify him in this, and that they also should be entertained with great honour, and rewarded with large gifts, especially seeing, through the con-

ference had with them, he perceived their pleasing behaviour. These men therefore considering that they could not easily return home without danger, consulting together, agreed to go with the said ambassador, and accompany him to the Emperor of the Tartars, having certain other Christians in their company, whom they brought with them from Venice; and departing towards the north-east and the north, were a whole year in going to the said court of the said king.

The cause of their long time spent in this journey, was the snows and waters being much increased, so that they were forced in their travel to stay the wasting of the snow, and decreasing of the floods. Being therefore brought before the presence of the Great Khan, they were most courteously received by him. He questioned them concerning many things; as of the countries of the west, the Roman Emperor, and other kings and princes, how they carried themselves in government, and in warlike affairs; how peace, justice, and concord continued among them: also what manner of life and customs were observed among the Latins, and especially of the Pope, of the Christians, of the Church, and of the religion of the Christian faith; and M. Nicolo and M. Maffio, as wise men, told him the truth, always speaking well to him, and orderly, in the Tartarian tongue; insomuch that he often commanded they should be brought to his presence, and they were very acceptable in his sight; having well understood the affairs of the Latins, and resting satisfied with their answers.

The Great Khan intending to send them his ambassadors to the Pope, first consulted with his great lords,

and then calling to him the two brethren, desired them to go to the Pope of the Romans, with one of his barons called Chogatal, to pray him to send an hundred men learned in the Christian religion unto him, who might show his wise men that the faith of the Christians was to be preferred before all other sects, and was the only way of salvation, and that the gods of the Tartars were devils, and that they, and others, the people of the east, were deceived in the worship of their gods. He gave them also in charge, to bring, in their return from Jerusalem, of the oil of the lamp which burneth before the sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ, towards whom he had great devotion, and held him to be the true God ; they therefore yielded due reverence to the Great Khan, promised that they would faithfully execute the charge committed unto them, and present the letters which they received from him, written in the Tartarian tongue, according to his command, unto the Bishop of Rome.

He, according to the custom of the kingdom, commanded a golden tablet to be given them, engraven and signed with the king's mark ; carrying which with them throughout his whole empire, instead of a passport, they might be everywhere safely conveyed through dangerous places, by the governors of provinces and cities, and receive their expenses from them ; and lastly, how long soever they would stay in any place, whatsoever they needed, for them or theirs, should be furnished them. Taking their leave therefore of the Emperor, they took their journey, carrying the letters and golden tablet with them ; and when

they had ridden twenty days' journey, the lord who was associated with them, began to fall grievously sick; whereupon consulting and leaving him there, they prosecuted their intended journey, being everywhere courteously received by reason of the Emperor's tablet; yet in many places they were compelled to stay, occasioned by the overflowings of the rivers, so that they spent three years before they came unto the port of the country of the Armenians, named Giazza; from Giazza they went to Acre, about the year of our Lord 1269, in the month of April.

But having entered into the city of Acre, they heard that Pope Clement the Fourth was lately dead, and that no other was substituted in his place, for which they were not a little grieved. At that time there was a certain legate of the Apostolic See at Acre, viz., Master Tibaldo Nisconti di Piacenza, to whom they declared all they had in commission from the Great Khan, and he advised them to expect the creation of a new Pope. In the mean space therefore departing to Venice to visit their friends, Master Nicolo found that his wife was dead, whom at his departure he had left with child, but had left a son named Marco, who was now nineteen years of age. This is that Marco who composed this book, who will manifest therein all those things that he hath seen. The election of the Pope of Rome was deferred two years. They fearing the discontent of the Emperor of the Tartars, who expected their return, went back again to Acre to the legate, carrying with them Marco aforesaid, and having gone to Jerusalem, and fetched the oil with the legate's

letter, testifying their fidelity to the Great Khan, and that a Pope was not yet chosen, they went again towards Giazza.

In the meantime messengers came from the cardinals to the legate, declaring to him that he was chosen Pope, and he called himself Gregory. Hearing this, he presently sent messengers to call back the Venetians, and admonishing them not to depart, prepared other letters for them, which they should present to the Great Khan of the Tartars, with whom he also joined two preaching friars, men famous for their honest conversation and learning. The one was called Friar Nicholo Davicenza, the other Friar Gulielmo de Tripoli; to these he gave letters and privileges, and authority to ordain priests and bishops, and of absolution in all cases as if himself were present, with presents also of great value, to present to the Great Khan, together with his benediction. They came to Giazza, a sea-port in Armenia, and because Benthochdas and the Sultan of Babylon, leading a great army, then invaded the Armenians, the two friars above mentioned began to be afraid of themselves, and delivering the letters and presents to Signiors Nicolo, Maffio and Marco, desiring to avoid the danger of the ways and peril of wars, remained with the master of the temple, and returned with him.

But the three Venetians exposing themselves to all danger, with many labours and much difficulty, travelled many days always towards the north-east and north, till they, after three years and a half, came to the Emperor of the Tartars great city of Clemenisu; for in the winter time their journey had often long

hindrances by reason of the snow and extreme cold, with inundations of waters. However, King Cublai hearing of their coming, though they were yet very far off, sent messengers forty days' journey to meet them, who should conduct them, and furnish all necessaries for their journey. Going therefore to the King's court, and being brought to his presence, they fell down before him on their faces, yielding the accustomed reverence; of whom being courteously received, they were ordered to rise, and he commanded them to declare how they passed the many dangers of the ways, and what they had treated with the Bishop of Rome; then they related it distinctly and at large, and gave the Emperor the Pope's letters and presents, which they brought; at which the Khan wonderfully rejoicing, commended their faithful cares. The oil also brought from the Lord's sepulchre, and offered unto him, he reverently received, commanded it should be honourably preserved, and asking of Marco, who he was? Master Nicolo answered, that he was his Majesty's servant, and his son; he entertained him with a friendly countenance, and taught him to write among other of his honourable courtiers; whereupon he was much esteemed of all the court, and in a little space learned the customs of all the Tartars, and four different languages, being able to write and read them all.

The Great Khan, to make his wisdom more apparent, committed an ambassage unto him to be performed in a city called Carachan, unto which he could scarcely travel in six months' space; but he carrying himself wisely in all things, discharged what he had in commission

with the commendation and favour of the prince, and knowing the Emperor would be delighted with novelties, in the places which he passed through, he diligently searched the customs and manners of men, and the conditions of the countries, making a memorial of all that he knew and saw to divert the Great Khan; and in six-and-twenty years which he continued one of his court, he was so acceptable to him, that he was continually sent through all his realms and signiories for the affairs of the Great Khan, and sometimes for his own, but by the Khan's order; and this is the true reason that the said Master Marco learned and saw so many particulars relating to the east, which follow in order in these memoirs; but these Venetians, having stayed in that court many years, and grown very rich in jewels of great value, were inspired with desire to visit their country, fearing that if the Khan (now old) should die, they should not be able to return. One day Master Nicolo, seeing the Khan merry, craved licence to depart in the name of all three: whereat he was moved, and asked why they would put themselves on so dangerous a journey, and if they wanted riches, he would give them twice as much as they had, and out of pure affection would not permit their departure.

Yet not long after it happened, that a king of the Indians, named Argon, sent three of his counsellors unto the court of the great Cublai, whose names were Ullatai, Apusea, and Coza, to treat with him, that he would deliver him a wife; for his wife, named Bolgana, being lately dead, begged this favour of the king at the point of death, and left in her will, that he should not

marry a wife of another family than her own, which was of Catha. King Cublai, therefore, yielding to his request, caused to be sought out for them a fair young maiden of seventeen years of age, named Cogalin, descended of the former queen's family, to be the wife of Argon. Those ambassadors departing, rode eight months the same way they came, but found bloody wars among the Tartars, so that they were constrained to return, and acquaint the Great Khan with their proceedings. In the mean time Master Marco had returned from those parts of India, where he had been employed with certain ships, and declared to the Khan the singularities of the places, and the security of those seas; which reaching the ears of the ambassadors, they conferred with the Venetians, and agreed, that they with the Queen should go to the Great Khan, and desire leave to return by sea, and to have the three Latins, men skilled in sea affairs, with them, to the country of King Argon. The Great Khan was much displeased with their request, yet upon their petition granted it, and caused Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco to come into his presence, and after much demonstration of his love, would have them promise to return to him after they had spent some time in Christendom, and in their own house; and he caused to be given them a tablet of gold, in which was written his command for their liberty and security through all his dominions, and that expenses should be given them and theirs, and a guide or convoy for safe passage, ordering also that they should be his ambassadors to the Pope, the kings of France and Spain, and and other Christian princes.

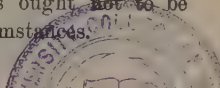
He caused fourteen ships to be prepared, each having four masts, and able to bear nine sails in sailing, the form of which is too long here to be related; four or five of them had from two hundred and fifty to two hundred and sixty mariners in each of them. In these ships, the 'ambassadors, the Queen, with Nicolo. Maffio, and Marco, set sail, having first taken leave of the Great Khan, who gave them many rubies and other precious stones, and their expenses for two years. After three months they came unto a certain island called Java, and from thence sailing through the Indian Sea, after eighteen months they came into the country of King Argon; six hundred men of the mariners and others, and but one of the women, died in the passage, but only Coza of the three ambassadors survived. When they came to the country of King Argon, they found that he was dead, and that one Chiacato governed the kingdom for his son, who was under age. They sent to acquaint him with their business, who answered that they should give her to Casan, the king's son, then in the parts of Arbor Secco, in the confines of Persia, with sixty thousand persons for the guard of certain passages against the enemy. Having done so, Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco returned to Chiacato, and stayed there nine months.

After this taking leave, Chiacato gave them four tables of gold, each a cubit long, and five fingers broad, of the weight of three or four marks, in which were written, that in the power of the Eternal God the name of the Great Khan should be honoured and praised many years, and every one who should not

obey should be put to death, and his goods confiscated. In them were further contained, that these three ambassadors should be honoured, and service done them in all lands and countries as to his own person, and that horses, convoys, expenses, and necessaries should be given them; all which was so duly put in execution, that sometimes they had two hundred horses for their safeguard. In this their travel, they heard that the Great Khan was dead, which took from them all desire of returning thither.

They rode till they came to Trebizond, and from thence to Constantinople, and after to Negropont, and at last came with great riches safe to Venice, A.D. 1295.

Here ends the historical introduction of our author, which shows us how he came to be qualified for writing the following description of the remotest countries in the east. The reader will naturally observe that our author wrote under very particular circumstances, as having no other knowledge than what he acquired amongst the Tartars; and therefore, though the harsh and uncouth names, that occur in the subsequent relation of his travels, may both disfigure and perplex them, yet they very plainly prove the sincerity and authority of our author's writings, since taking things as he has stated them, it was simply impossible that he should have written them any otherwise than as they stand; for it was his hard lot to travel with the Tartars, and to pen the history of his travels in a prison, so that their imperfections ought not to be ascribed to the man, but to his circumstances.



CHAPTER VII.

A DESCRIPTION OF ARMENIA THE LESSER; OF THE COUNTRY OF THE TURKS; OF ARMENIA THE GREATER; OF THE PROVINCE OF ZORZANIA, THE KINGDOM OF MOSUL; OF THE CITY OF BALDACH OR BAGDAT; OF THE CITY OF TAURIS; WITH AN ACCOUNT OF A REMARKABLE EARTHQUAKE.

THERE are two Armenias, the Greater and the Less. In the Lesser Armenia the king resides, in a city called Sebaste, and in all his country is observed justice and good government. The kingdom itself hath many cities, fortresses, and castles; the soil also is fertile, and the country abounds with everything necessary, nor is there any want of game or wild-fowl; the air indeed is not very good. The gentlemen of Armenia, in times past, were stout men and good soldiers, but are become now effeminate and nice, giving themselves up to drunkenness and riot. There is a certain city in this kingdom seated near the sea, which is called Giazza, having an excellent haven, whither merchants resort from divers countries, and even from Venice and Genoa, on account of several sorts of merchandise brought thither, especially spices of sundry kinds, and abundance of other valuable goods brought thither out of the east countries; for this place is, as it were, the settled mart of all the east.

In Turcomania are three sorts of nations, viz., the Turcomans or Turkmen, who observe the law of Mohammed. They are men illiterate, rude, and savage, inhabiting the mountains and inaccessible places, where they can find pastures; for they live only

by their cattle. There are good horses in this country, which are called Turkish horses; mules are also in that country of great estimation. The other nations are Grecians and Armenians, who possess the cities and towns, and bestow their labour on merchandise and arts. They make the best carpets in the world, and they have many cities, the chief whereof are Cogno, Iconium, Cæsarea, and Sebaste, where St. Basil suffered martyrdom for Christ, and they acknowledged one of the Khans, kings of the Tartars, for their lord.

Armenia the Greater is a very large province, tributary to the Tartars, and hath many cities and towns, the chief city whereof is called Arzugia, and the best buckram in the world is made there. Most wholesome hot waters also spring there for the washing and curing of men's bodies; and the other more famous cities next to the metropolis are Argiron and Darziz. In the summer time many Tartars resort there with their flocks and herds, drawn thither by the fatness of their pastures; and again in the winter depart for a certain time, by reason of the abundance of snow. The Ark of Noah remained in the mountains of this Armenia.

This country hath the province of Moxul and Meridin bordering on the east; but on the north is Zorzanian, in the confines of which a fountain is found, from which a liquor like oil flows, and though unprofitable for the seasoning of meat, yet is very fit for the supplying of lamps, and to anoint other things; and this natural oil flows constantly, and that in plenty enough to lade camels. In Zorzanian is a king called

David Melic, or King David ; one part of the province is subject unto him, the other pays tribute to a Khan of the Tartars. The woods there are of box-trees. The country extends to the two seas, Marmaggiore, or the Euxine, and that of Baccu, or the Caspian, which containeth in circuit two thousand eight hundred miles, and is like a lake having no communication with other seas. In it are many islands, cities, and castles, some of which are inhabited by those that fled from the Tartars out of Persia.

The people of Zorzania are Christians, observing the same rites with other Christians. They keep their hair short like the western clergy; the inhabitants have many cities, and their country abounds with silk, of which they make very fine manufactures. Moxul is a province in which there are many sorts of people : some called Arabians, are Mohammedans, others are Christians, some Nestorians, others Jacobites, and others Armenians ; and they have a patriarch called Jacolet, who ordains archbishops, bishops, and abbots, and sends them through all parts of India, and to Cairo and Baldach, or Bagdat, and wherever Christians dwell, as is done by the Pope of Rome ; and all the stuffs of gold and silk, called musleims, are wrought in Moxul.

But in the mountains of this kingdom dwell the people called Curdi, of whom some are Nestorians, others Jacobites, and some followers of Mohammed ; they are wicked men, and rob merchants. Near to them is another province called Mus, or Meridin, wherein grow great quantities of cotton, whereof they

make buckrams, and other works; they are subject to the Tartars. Baldach, or Bagdat, is a great city, in which resided the great Khaliff, that is the Pope of all the Saracens; a river runs through it, from whence to the sea is accounted seventeen days' journey. They sail by a city called Chisi; but before they reach the sea they come to Balsora, about which grow the best dates in the world. In Baldach, or Bagdat, are many manufactures of gold and silk. There are wrought damasks and velvets, with figures of various creatures: all the pearls in Christendom come from thence. In that city is an university, where is studied the law of Mohammed, physic, astronomy, and geomancy. It is the chief city in those parts.

When the Tartars began to extend their conquests there were four brethren, the eldest of which, Mangu, reigned in Sedia. These purposing to subdue the world, went one to the east, another to the north, to the south a third, which was Ulan, and the other to the west. In the year of Our Lord 1250, Ulan, having a great army of one hundred thousand horse, besides foot, used policy, and having hid a great part of his men, brought, by pretending flight, the Khaliff into his ambuscade, and took him and the city, in which he found infinite store of treasure, insomuch that he was amazed. He sent for the Khaliff and reproved him, that in that war he had not provided himself with soldiers for defence, and commanded that he should be enclosed in that tower where his treasure was, without other sustenance.

This seemed a just judgment from our Lord Jesus

Christ on him ; for in the year 1225, seeking to convert the Christians to the Mohammedan religion, and taking advantage from that place of the Gospel, "That he which hath faith, as the grain of mustard-seed, shall be able to remove mountains," he summoned all the Christians, Nestorians, and Jacobites, and propounded to them in ten days to remove a certain mountain, or turn Mohammedans, or be slain, as not having one man amongst them which had the least faith. They therefore continued eight days in prayer, after which a certain shoemaker, in consequence of a revelation made to a certain bishop, was fixed upon to perform it. This shoemaker, once tempted to lust by sight of a young woman in putting on her shoe, zealously had fulfilled that of the Gospel, and literally had put out his right eye. He now on the day appointed, with other Christians, followed the cross, and lifting his hands to heaven, prayed to God to have mercy on his people, and then with a loud voice commanded the mountain in the name of the Holy Trinity to remove; which presently, with great terror to the Khaliff and all his people, was effected, and that day is since kept holy by fasting, also on the evening before it.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE COUNTRY OF PERSIA, THE CITY OF JASDI, THE CITY OF Cerman, OF THE TOWN OF CAMANDU, AND OF THE COUNTRY WHERE RHUBARB GROWS.

TAURIS is a great city in the province of Hircania, and is a most populous place. The inhabitants live by

the exercise of arts and merchandise; they make stuffs of gold and silk. Foreign merchants residing there make very great gain, but the inhabitants are generally poor. They are a mixed people, of Nestorians, Armenians, Jacobites, Georgians, Persians, and Mohammedans. These last are perfidious and treacherous, thinking all well gotten which they steal from men of other religions; and this wickedness of the Saracens had converted many Tartars thereto. If the Christians kill them in their robbery, they are reputed martyrs. From Tauris into Persia are twelve days' journey. In the confines is the monastery of St. Barasam, the monks whereof are like Carmelites; they make girdles which they lay on the altar, and give to their friends, who devoutly esteem them. Persia containeth eight kingdoms, whereof the first is called Casbin, the second Curdistan, the third Lor, the fourth Susistan, the fifth Spahan, the sixth Shiras, the seventh Soncara, the eighth Timochaim, which is near Arboresecco towards the north. They have fine horses here, whence they are sold into India; there are also very excellent asses sold dearer than the horses, because they eat little, carry much, and travel far. They have camels, but not so swift. These are necessary in those countries, which sometimes for a long way yield no grass.

The people of those countries are very wicked, covetous, thieves, and murderers, professing the faith of Mohammed. Merchants are everywhere slain by those thieves, unless they travel in caravans. There are excellent artificers in the cities, who make wonderful things in gold, silk, and embroidery. The

countries abound with silkworms, wheat, barley, millet, and other kinds of corn, and plenty of wine and fruits; and though their law forbids wine, yet they have a gloss to correct or corrupt the text, that if they boil it then it changeth the taste, and therefore the name also, of wine, and may be drank. Iasdi is a great city in the confines of Persia, where there is great trade; it hath also many manufactures in silk. Chaiman is a kingdom in the confines of Persia to the east, subject to the Tartars. In veins of the mountains stones are found, commonly called turquoises, and other jewels. There also are made all sorts of arms and ammunition for war, and by the women excellent needleworks in silks, with all sorts of creatures very admirably wrought therein. There are the best falcons in the world, very swift of flight, red-breasted, and under the train less than those of other countries. Proceeding further, you go through a great plain, and having ended eight days' journey, you come to a certain descent. In the plain are many castles and towns, but in that steep descent are many trees, and those fruitful, but no habitation, except a few shepherds' huts. This country in winter time is intolerably cold. After this you come into a large open plain, where a certain city is seated, which is called Camandu, heretofore large and populous, but now destroyed by the Tartars, and the country is called Reobarle. There grow pomegranates, quinces, peaches, and other fruits, which grow not in our cold countries. It hath also very great oxen, and all white, thin haired with thick, short, blunt horns, with a camel's bunch on the back, accustomed to bear great burthens; and when

the pack-saddles are set upon the bunch, they bow their knee like camels, and having received the burthen, rise again, being so taught. The sheep of that country are as big as asses, having so long and broad tails that they weigh thirty pounds weight. They are very fair, and fat, and good meat.

Moreover, in the plain of this country are many cities and towns, with high walls of earth to defend them from the Caraons, that is, Mestizos, that is a mixed sort of people between Indian women and Tartars, ten thousand of which are commanded by one Nugodar, the nephew of Zagathai, who formerly ruled in Turkestan. This Nugodar, hearing of the Malabars subject to Soldan Asiden, without his uncle's knowledge, went and took Dely with other cities, erected a new seigniory, and mixing with the Indian women, raised these Caraons, which go up and down to rob and spoil in Roobarle and other countries. The plain whereof I now speak is five days' journey, extending towards the south, but at the end thereof the way begins by little and little to descend for twenty miles together, and the road itself is very bad, and not without danger by reason of thieves. At length you come to very good plains, which extend themselves two days' journey in length, and the place itself is called Ormus.

That country abounds with rivers and palm-trees; there is also plenty of divers fowls, especially popinjays, which are not like ours. From hence you come unto the ocean, wherein an island is seated called Ormus, to which many merchants resort, bringing spices, pearls, precious stones, cloth of gold and silver,

elephants' teeth, and all other precious things from India. That city is a great mart, having cities and castles under it, and is head of the kingdom of Chermain. The king is called Ruchined Ben Achomach, who yields obedience to the King of Chermain. He makes himself heir, if any merchant dies there. In summer, by reason of the heat, they betake themselves to their summer-houses, built in the waters; and from nine till noon there blows a wind with such extreme heat from the sands, that it swallows a man's breath, and stifles him, which makes them lie in the water. The King of Chermain sent an army of sixteen hundred horse, and five thousand foot, against the Lord of Ormus, for not paying his tribute, which were all surprised, and stifled with that wind. The inhabitants of the place eat no bread made of corn or flesh, but feed upon dates, salt fish, and onions. They have not very stout ships, for they do not fasten them with iron nails, by reason the wood is brittle and would cleave; but with wooden pins, with certain threads made of the shells of Indian nuts. These shells are dressed after the manner of leather, out of which threads are cut, of which threads exceeding strong cords are made, which are able to endure the force and violence of the waters, and are not easily corrupted thereby. Those ships have one mast, one sail, one beam, and are covered but with one deck. They are not calked with pitch, but with the oil and fat of fishes; and when they cross the sea to India, carrying horses and other freight with them, they lose many ships, because that

sea is very tempestuous, and the ships are not strengthened with iron. The inhabitants of that country are black, and have embraced the law of Mohammed. It is the custom of this country, when any master of a family dies, that the wife left behind him should mourn for him four years, once a day. They have women which profess the practice of mourning, and are therefore hired to mourn daily for their dead. Returning from Ormus to Chermain, is a fertile plain, but the bread made there cannot be eaten but by such as are accustomed thereto, it is so bitter, by reason of the water put therein : here are excellent hot baths, which cure many diseases.

CHAPTER IX.

OF SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES, AND THE PRINCIPAL
CURIOSITIES IN THEM.

FROM Chermain, in three days' riding, you come to a desert, which extends to Cobinham, seven days' journey from thence. In the first three days you have no water, save a few ponds, and those salt and bitter, of a green colour in show, as if it were the juice of herbs ; and whoever tasteth but a little thereof cannot escape a looseness ; the like also happeneth if any taste the salt made of the water : it is therefore necessary that travellers carry some water with them, if they would escape the inconvenience of thirst ; the beasts also which are compelled to drink that water escape not without scouring : in the fourth day they find a fresh river under ground ; the three last days are as

the first. Cobinham is a great city, inhabited by Mohammedans, where great looking-glasses of steel are made. Tutia, or tutty also, which cureth the eyes, and spodio, is prepared after this manner. That country hath mines, out of which they dig earth, which they boil, casting it into a furnace, an iron gate receiving the ascending vapour from above, in which the conglutinated and clammy vapour becometh tutia, but the grosser matter remaining in the fire is called spodio. Leaving the city of Cobinham, you meet with another desert, eight days' journey in length, and grievously barren; it hath not either trees, or fruits, or water, except what is very bitter, so that the very beasts refuse to drink it, except they mix meal therewith, and travellers carry water with them.

But having passed over this desert, you come to the kingdom of Timochaim, in the north confines of Persia, where are many cities and strong castles. There is a great plain, in which a great tree grows, called the Tree of the Sun, which the Christians call the Dry Tree. This tree is very thick, and hath leaves which on the one side are white, and on the other side green. It produceth prickly husky shells, like those of chestnuts, but nothing in them. The wood is solid and strong, in colour yellow, like box. There is no tree within one hundred miles, except on one side, on which are trees within miles. In this place the inhabitants say that Alexander the Great fought with Darius. The cities are plentifully furnished with good things; the air is temperate, the people are handsome, but especially women, the most beautiful in my judgment in the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE HISTORY OF THE ASSASSINS, AND OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THEIR PRINCE WAS KILLED, TOGETHER WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF MANY OTHER COUNTRIES.

MULEHET, in the Saracen language, is as much as to say a place of heretics, and of this place they call the men Mulehetici, that is, heretics in their law, as with us Patarines. As I have spoken of the country, the Prince of it, who is called the Old Man of the Mountain, shall be next spoken of, concerning whom Marco heard much from many. His name was Aloadine, and he was a Mohammedan. He had, in a lovely valley, betwixt two mountains, which were very high and inaccessible, caused a pleasant garden to be laid out, furnished with the best trees and fruits he could find, adorned with divers palaces and houses of pleasure, beautified with gilded bowers, pictures, and tapestries of silk. Through this place, by pipes to different parts of these palaces, run wine, milk, honey, and clear water; in them he had placed beautiful damsels, skilful in songs and instruments of music and dancing, and to make sports and delights unto men whatsoever they could imagine. They were also richly dressed in gold and silk, and were seen continually sporting in the garden and palaces. He made this palace because Mohammed had promised such a sensual paradise to his devout followers. No man could enter it; for at the mouth of the valley was a strong castle, and the entrance was by a secret passage.

Aloadine had certain youths, from twelve to twenty years of age, such as seemed of a bold and dauntless disposition, whom he instructed daily as to the delights in Mohammed's paradise, and how he could bring men thither; and when he thought proper, he caused a certain drink to be given to ten or twelve of them, which cast them into a dead sleep, and then he caused them to be carried into several chambers of the said palaces, where they saw things as aforesaid; as soon as they awaked, each of them had those damsels to supply them with meats and excellent wines, and yield all varieties of pleasures to them; insomuch that the fools thought themselves in paradise indeed.

When they had enjoyed these pleasures four or five days, they were cast into a sleep, and carried forth again; after which he caused them to be brought into his presence, and questioned them where they had been? who answered, "By your grace, in paradise;" and recounted before all what hath been before mentioned. Then the Old Man answered, "This is the commandment of our prophet, that whosoever defends his Lord, he allows him to enter paradise; and if thou wilt be obedient unto me, thou shalt have this grace;" and having thus animated them, he was thought happy whom the Old Man would command, though it cost him his life; so that other lords, and his enemies, were slain by these assassins, who exposed themselves to all dangers, and contemned their lives. Hereupon he was esteemed a tyrant, feared in all those parts, and had two vicars, one in the parts of Damascus, and another in Curdistan, which observed

the same order with the young men. He used also to rob all which passed that way. Ulan, in the year 1262, sent and besieged his castle, which, after three years' siege, they took, slew him, and undermined his paradise, not being able for want of provisions to hold out longer.

Departing from the aforesaid place you come unto a country pleasant enough, diversified by hills, plains, and excellent pasture, in which are fruits in great plenty, the soil being very fruitful: this continues six days, and then you enter a desert of forty or fifty miles, without water; after this you come to the city of Sapurgan, where plenty of provisions are found, but especially melons, the best in the world, sweet like honey. Passing from hence we came to a certain city called Batach, which formerly was large and famous, having sumptuous marble palaces, but now overthrown by the Tartars.

In this city they report that Alexander took the daughter of King Darius to wife. To this city on the east and north-east continue the confines of Persia; but if you go from hence, and proceed between the east and the north-east, you cannot find any habitation for two days' journey, because the inhabitants of that place having endured many great grievances by thieves, are compelled to fly unto the mountains, to places of more safety. Many rivers are found there and much game. Lions also are found there; and because travellers find no food in that journey, they carry as much victuals with them as is necessary for two days. The two days' journey ended, we met with

a castle called Thaican, where is great plenty of corn, and very pleasant fields; the mountains also on the south are high, some of which are of white and hard salt; and the inhabitants for thirty days' journey about fetch it from thence, being the best in the world, and so hard that they must break it with iron instruments, so much that the whole world might have a sufficient quantity of salt from thence. The other mountains have store of almonds and pistaches.

Going between the east and north-east from hence, the country is fruitful; but the inhabitants are murderers, perfidious Mohammedans, and drunkards. Their wine is boiled, and truly excellent. They go bare-headed, save that the men bind up their heads with a certain string of ten handfuls long; but they make clothing of the skins of wild beasts, such as breeches and shoes, and use no other garments. After three days' journey is the city Scassom, seated in a plain, and there are many castles in the mountains round about it: a certain great river also flows through the middle thereof. There are many porcupines in that country, which they hunt with dogs, and they, contracting themselves with great fury, cast their prickly quills at men and dogs, and wound them. That nation hath a particular language, and the shepherds abide in the mountains, having made caves for their habitations. You go hence three days' journey, without meeting any inhabitants, to the province of Balaxiam, which is inhabited by Mohammedans, who have a peculiar language. Their kings, who succeed each other hereditarily, are re-

ported to have derived their descent from Alexander the Great, and from the daughter of Darius, and are called Dulcarlen, that is to say, Alexandrians. There are found the ballassas, and other precious stones, of great value.

No man, on pain of death, dare either dig such stones, or carry them out of the country, but with the licence and consent of the king; for all those stones are the king's, and he only sends them to whom he pleases, either as presents, or in payment of tribute: he exchanges also many for gold and silver; and this he doth lest the stone, whereof there is so much plenty, should become too common and cheap. Other mountains also in this province yield stones called Lapis Lazuli, whereof the best azure is made; the like is not found in the world. These mines also yield silver, brass and lead. The country itself is very cold: there are many horses, and those excellent, large, strong, and swift, which have so hard and tough hoofs, that they need no iron shoes, although they run over rocks. It is said that not many years ago there were horses of the race of Alexander's Bucephalus, which had the same forehead mark as he had, in the possession only of the king's uncle, who was killed for refusing the king to have some of them; whereupon his widow, in spite, destroyed the whole race. There are also excellent falcons. The soil of this country bears excellent wheat and barley without husk, and oil made of nuts, and mustard, which is like flax-seed, but more savoury than other oil. There are straight passages and difficult places. The men are

good archers and huntsmen, clothed in beasts' skins. The hills are steep and high, large plains, fine rivers; and if any have an ague, by living two or three days on the hills he recovers, which Marco experienced himself after a year's sickness. The women in the skirts of their garments put sixty or eighty yards of cotton; the burlier a woman looks, she is in their eyes the handsomer.

The province of Bascia is ten days' journey towards the south from the country of Balexiam. The country itself is very hot, which is the reason the people are brown. They have a language of their own, and wear gold and silver earrings, with pearls and other stones artificially wrought in them; they eat fish and rice, and are idolaters, crafty and cruel. The province of Chesmur is seven days' journey distant from Bascia, the inhabitants whereof have also their own language, and are idolaters beyond all others, cunning enchanters, forcing their idols to speak, and darkening the day. From hence you may go to the Indian sea. The men and women are brown, not wholly black, the heat being somewhat tempered. Their food is flesh and rice, yet are they exceedingly lean: there are many cities and towns in this country; their king is tributary to none. There are certain hermits in this province, who in monasteries and cells worship idols, honouring their gods with great abstinence of meat and drink, and observe great chastity, are very cautious not to offend their idols, and live long; of these are many reputed saints, and the people show them great reverence. The men of this province kill no living

creature, and shed no blood; and if they eat flesh, it is necessary that the Saracens, who live amongst them, kill the creature. Coral is here sold dearer than anywhere. We will leave the way to India now, and return to Balaxiam, and direct our way towards Cathay, betwixt the east and north-east. Beyond Balaxiam is a certain river, whereon stand many castles and villages belonging to the King of Balaxiam's brother; and after three days' journey is the province Vachan, having in length and breadth three days' journey, the inhabitants whereof have a peculiar language, and worship Mohammed. They are, however, stout warriors and good hunters, for the country abounds with wild beasts.

If you depart thence betwixt the north-east and east, you must ascend for three whole days together, until you come to an exceeding high mountain, than which there is said to be none higher in the world. There also between two mountains is a great lake, and through a plain runs a very fine river, near which are excellent pastures, so that in them a lean horse or an ox may be fat in ten days. There is also plenty of wild beasts, especially exceeding great wild sheep, having horns, some of them six spans long, of which they make divers kinds of vessels. The plain contains twelve days' journey in length, and is called Pamer; nor is there any habitation there; and travellers must carry victuals with them. No bird also appears there, by reason of the cold; and it is reported that if fire be kindled there it is not so bright nor so effectual to boil anything as in other places. From hence the way leadeth forty days' journey further between the east and north-east,

through the mountains, hills, and valleys, in which many rivers are found, but no village or herbs, and the country itself is called Palow, and some huts and cottages of men are seen on the tops of those high mountains, but such as are savage and wicked idolaters, who live by hunting, and are clothed by the skins of the beasts they kill. After this you come to the province of Chascar, which is tributary to the Great Khan, and the people are Mohammedans. In it are vines, pleasant gardens, fruitful trees, cotton, flax, and hemp, and a fertile soil. The inhabitants have a particular language, and are merchants and artificers, so covetous, that they eat that which is bad, and drink worse. Some Nestorian Christians are found there, who also have their churches. The country extends itself five days' journey.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE CITY OF SAMARCAND, THE TOWN OF LOP,
AND OF THE GREAT DESERT IN ITS NEIGHBOUR-
HOOD, WITH OTHER REMARKABLE PASSAGES.

SAMARCAND is a great and famous city, in that country, where are lovely gardens and a fertile plain. It is subject to the nephew of the Great Khan; in it the Christians dwell with the Saracens, whence little agreement is betwixt them. It is reported that on this account a miracle happened. The brother of the Great Khan, named Zagatai, who governed that country about a hundred years ago, being persuaded to become a Christian, the Christians, through his favour, built a church in honour of St. John the Baptist, with such

cunning, that the whole roof thereof was supported by one pillar in the midst, under which was set a square stone, which, by favour of their Lord, was taken from a building of the Saracens. Zagatai's son succeeded after his death in the kingdom, but not in the faith, from whom the Saracens obtained that the Christians should be compelled to restore that stone; and when they offered a sufficient price, the Saracens refused to receive any other composition than the stone; whereupon the pillar lifted up, that the Saracens might take away their stone, and so continued.

Departing again from this city, you come into the province Charahan, about five days' journey in length. This province hath plenty of provisions, being subject to the dominion of the nephew of the Great Khan. The inhabitants worship Mohammed, yet among them certain Nestorian Christians dwell. They are great artificers, and have most of them swelled legs, and a great wen or bunch in the throat, by reason of the waters which they drink. The province Cotam follows between the east and north-east. It is subject to the dominion of the nephew of the Great Khan, and hath many cities and towns. The chief city thereof is called Cotam. The province extends eight days' journey in length. There is no want there of anything needful to the maintenance of life. It hath plenty of cotton, flax, hemp, corn, and wine; but the people are not warlike, yet good artificers in various manufactures and merchandise. They acknowledge Mohammed for their prophet.

Proceeding farther through the same country, you

come to the province Piem, extending four days' journey in length; it is subject to the Great Khan, and hath many cities and castles; the chief city thereof is called Piem, near which runs a river wherein precious stones are found, such as jaspers and chalcedons. The inhabitants of the country follow the law of Mohammed, and are artificers and merchants. There is a custom in this province, that when any married man goeth into another place and returneth not home in twenty days, it becomes lawful for the wife to marry another husband; and the men also, whensoever the women go away for the same time, do the like. All those provinces, viz., Cascha, Cotem, Piem, to the city of Lop, are in the bounds of Turkestan.

Ciascian is subject to the Tartars; the name of the province and chief city is the same; it hath many cities and castles; many precious stones are found there in the rivers, especially jaspers and chalcedons, which merchants carry quite to Ouchach to sell and make great gain. From Piem to this province, and quite through it also, it is a sandy soil, with many bad waters, and few good. When an army passes through this province, all the inhabitants thereof, with their wives, children, cattle, and all their household-stuff, fly two days' journey into the sands, where they know that good waters are, and stay there, and carry their corn thither also to hide it in the sands, after harvest, from the like fears. The wind doth so deface their steps in the sand, that their enemies cannot find their way. Departing from this province, you are to travel five days' journey through the sands, where no other water almost than

that which is bitter is anywhere to be found, until you come to the city called Lop, which is a great city, from whence is the entrance of a great desert, called also the Wilderness of Lop, seated between the east and north-east. The inhabitants are Mohammedans, subject to the Great Khan.

In the city of Lop, merchants who desire to pass over the desert cause all necessaries to be provided for them; and when victuals begin to fail in the desert, they kill their asses and camels and eat them. They make it mostly their choice to use camels, because they are sustained with little meat, and bear great burthens. They must provide victuals for a month to cross it only, for to go through it lengthways would require a year's time. They go through the sands and barren mountains, and daily find water; yet it is sometimes so little that it will hardly suffice fifty or a hundred men with their beasts; and in three or four places the water is salt and bitter. The rest of the road for eight-and-twenty days is very good. In it there are not either beasts or birds; they say, that there dwell many spirits in this wilderness, which cause great and marvellous illusions to travellers, and make them perish; for if any stay behind, and cannot see his company, he shall be called by his name, and so going out of the way is lost. In night they hear as it were the noise of a company, which taking to be theirs, they perish likewise. Concerts of musical instruments are sometimes heard in the air, likewise drums and noises of armies. They go therefore close together, hang bells on their beasts' neck, and set marks, if any stay.

Having passed over the desert, you come into the city Sachion, betwixt the east and north-east, subject to the Great Khan, in the province of Tangut, where, amongst the worshippers of Mohammed, a few Nestorian Christians are found ; many idolaters are also there, who have their proper language. The inhabitants of this city live not by merchandise, but on the fruits of the earth. The city hath many monasteries, consecrated to divers idols, in which many sacrifices are offered with great reverence : and when a son is born to a man he presently commendeth him to some idol, and in honour thereof nourisheth a sheep that year in his house, which he presenteth before it, together with his son, the next festival day of that idol, with many ceremonies and great reverence. Afterwards the flesh of the sheep is boiled, and left so long before the idol till their prayers are finished, which they make for the conservation of their son ; and the idol hath, as they suppose, sucked the savour of the meat ; after which, all his kindred being gathered together, eat the flesh at home with great devotion and joy, but religiously keep the bones in certain vessels. The priests have the feet, head, inwards, skin, and some part of the flesh for their share.

In celebrating the funerals of such as were men in esteem, the dead bodies are buried after this manner : the kindred send for the astrologers, and tell them what year, month, day, and hour he who died was born, who, having considered the constellation, assign the day when he is to be buried ; so that when the planet suits not, they preserve the dead body sometimes seven days, and sometimes six months, preparing a chest for it at home,

and joining the sides together with such art that no noisome smells issue forth. They also embalm the body itself with spices, and cover the chest, fairly painted, with embroidered cloth; and every day that the dead corpse is kept at home, at the hour of dinner a table is spread near the chest, wine and meat set thereon, for the space in which one might eat a meal's meat, supposing that the soul of the dead feedeth on the savour thereof. The astrologers sometimes forbid to carry it out of the chief gate, pretending some disastrous star, and cause them to carry it out another way, and sometimes break the wall which is opposite to that place, which the planet makes more lucky; for otherwise the spirits departed would be offended, and hurt those of the house; and if any such evil happen, they ascribe it to the dead thus wronged. When the body is carried through the city to be buried without, wooden cottages are erected in the way, with a porch covered with silk, in which they place the body, and set before it bread, flesh, and delicate meats, supposing the spirit to be refreshed therewith, which is held to be constantly present at the burying of the body; and when they come to the place where the body is to be buried, they diligently and curiously paint upon papers made of the bark of trees the images of men and women, horses, camels, money, and garments, all the instruments of the city sounding, which are burned together with the dead body; for they say, that dead men shall have so many men-servants, and maid-servants, cattle, and money in another life as pictures were burned with him, and shall perpetually live in that honour and riches.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE PROVINCE OF CAMUL, AND SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES TO THE CITY OF EZINA, AND ANOTHER GREAT DESERT.

THE province of Camul lieth in the wide country of Tangut, subject to the Great Khan, having many cities and towns; the chief city is called Camul. This province is bounded by two deserts, viz., the great desert, of which we have spoken before, and another that is less, of three days' journey. It abounds with all things for the convenient support of life. The inhabitants are idolaters, have a peculiar language, and seem to be born for no other purpose but to apply themselves to sporting, singing, dancing, writing, and reading, after their fashion, playing on instruments, and giving themselves unto pleasure. When any traveller passing by goes into any man's house for entertainment, the master of the family receives him with great joy, and commands his wife, and all the family, that as long as he will abide with them, they obey him in all things. In the meantime he departs, and returns not so long as the guest remains at his house; and during all this space, the stranger lies with the wife, daughter, and the rest, as with his own wives. The women of the country are beautiful, and ready to obey all these commandments of their husbands, who are so besotted with this folly, that they think it a glorious thing for them, and believe it so acceptable to their idols, that through their favour thus obtained, they prosper and enjoy plenty of all things. Mangu Khan having heard of

this folly, commanded them not to observe this detestable custom any longer, and accordingly they forbore it for about three years; and then not seeing their wonted fertility, and troubled with some domestic crosses, they sent ambassadors to the Khan and earnestly entreated that he would revoke so grievous an edict, and not abolish that ancient custom which they had received from their ancestors. The Khan answered, since you desire your reproach and shame, let it be granted you; go and do herein after your wont. The messengers returning with this answer, brought great joy to all the people; and this custom is observed by the whole nation to this day.

After the province of Camul, a traveller entered the province of Chinchintalas, which on the north is bounded by the desert, and is sixteen days' journey in length, subject to the Great Khan. It hath large cities, and many castles; the people are divided into three sects; some few acknowledge Christ, and these are Nestorians; others worship Mohammed; and the third sort adore idols. In this province there is a mountain, wherein are mines of steel, and andanicum, and also, as was reported, salamanders, of the wool of which cloth was made, which if cast into the fire cannot be burned; but that cloth is in reality made of stone in this manner, as one of my companions, a Turk, named Curifar, a man endued with singular industry, informed me, who had the charge of the minerals in that province. A certain mineral is found in that mountain which yields thread not unlike to wool; and these being dried in the sun, are bruised in a brazen mortar and afterwards washed,

and whatsoever earthy substance sticks to them is taken away. Lastly, these threads so cleansed are spun like other wool, and woven into cloth; and when they would whiten those cloths, they cast them into the fire for an hour, and then take them out unhurt whiter than snow; after the same manner they cleanse them when they have taken any spots; for no other washing is used to them, besides the fire. But with regard to the salamander, or the serpent, which is reported to live in the fire, I could find nothing of such a creature in the east countries. They say there is a certain napkin at Rome woven in Salamander wool, wherein the handkerchief of the Lord is kept wrapped up, which a certain King of the Tartars sent to the Bishop of Rome.

After you are past this province, you travel on betwixt the east and north-east ten days' journey, in which few habitations or things remarkable are found, and then you come to the province Succir, in which are many villages and towns; the chief city is called Succir. In this province, among many idolaters, a few Christians are found; they are subject to the Great Khan. They do not addict themselves to merchandise, but live on the fruits of the earth. The best rhubarb is found in this province in great quantities, which is carried thence by merchants to divers parts of the world. Strangers dare not go to the mountains where it grows, by reason of venomous herbs, which if their beasts should eat they will lose their hoofs; but those of that country know and avoid them.

The general name of this province and of the two

following is Tangut: Campion is a great city, the principal in the country of Tangut. In it are Christians, which have three great and fair churches, Moham-medans, and idolaters. The idolaters have many monasteries, where they worship their idols. Those idols are made either of stone, wood, or clay, some of which are inlaid with gold, and very artificially wrought. Some are so great that they contain ten paces in length, fastened to the earth, as if they lay upright, near which little idols are placed, which seem to give reverence to the greater, and both are much worshipped. The religious men seem to live more honestly than other idolaters, abstaining from whoredom, and other base things; yet wantonness is not held there any grievous sin; for they say, if a woman sues to a man, he may use her without sin, but not if he first sues to her. They reckon the whole compass of the year by moons. In the moons they observe in some five, in others four or three days, wherein they kill no beast, or bird, nor eat flesh. The laymen marry twenty or thirty wives, or as many as they are able to maintain; yet the first is accounted more worthy and more legitimate. The husband receives no dowry from the wife, but he himself assigns sufficient dowry in cattle, servants, or money, according to his ability. If the wife becomes hateful to the husband, it is lawful for him to divorce her from him when he pleases. They take for wives, without scruple, their kinswomen or mothers-in-law. Our author, together with his father and uncle, remained a year in this city for the dispatch of certain affairs. From the city Campion you proceed twelve

days' journey to the city Ezina, bordering on a sandy desert towards the north, being still in the province or kingdom of Tangut. Many camels are there, and many other beasts and animals of several kinds. The inhabitants are idolaters, living on the fruits of the earth, neglecting' merchandise, or manual labour, other than husbandry. All the provinces and cities aforesaid, Sachion, Camul, Chinchintalos, Succir, Campion, and Ezina, are comprehended in Tangut.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE CITY OF CARACARUM, AND OF THE TARTARS,
WITH A COMPLETE HISTORY OF THAT NATION,
AND OF THEIR MONARCHS.

HAVING passed over the aforesaid desert, you come unto the city Careoran, or Caracarum, a large place, which is in compass three miles, strongly fortified with earth, for stone they have none. Near it is a great castle, and in it the Governor's fair palace. This was a place, near which in old times the Tartars assembled themselves, and here therefore we will declare how they began to reign. They dwelt in the north parts, viz., in Curza and Bargu, where are many vast plains, without cities and towns, but abounding in pastures, rivers, and lakes. They had not a prince of their nation, but paid tribute to a certain great king named, as I have heard in their language, Umcan, which in some men's opinion in our language signifieth presbyter, or priest John. To him the Tartars gave yearly the tenths of all their beasts. In process of time the Tartars so increased in

multitudes, that Umcan was afraid of them, and thought to disperse them into several parts of the world, and therefore when any of them rebelled, he sent three or four hundred Tartars into those parts, so diminishing their power: and the like he did on other occasions, deputing some of their nobility for that purpose. They, seeing their ruin intended, and loth to be separated one from another, went from the places where they dwelt to the desert towards the north, where they might be safe, and denied Umcan their accustomed tribute.

It happened that about the year A.D. 1162, the Tartars having continued for some time in those parts, chose a king among themselves, a wise, and valiant man, named Zingis-Khan; he began to reign with such justice, that he was beloved and feared of all as a god rather than a prince, insomuch that his fame brought all the Tartars in all parts to his subjection, and he, seeing himself lord over so many valiant men, determined to leave these deserts, and commanding them to provide bows and other weapons, began to subdue cities and provinces, in which conquests he placed such just governors, that the people were not displeased. The chief of them he carried along with him, bestowing on them provisions and gifts. Seeing, therefore, that he was advanced to so great glory and power, he sent ambassadors politely to Umcan, to entreat that he would bestow his daughter upon him to be his wife, which he taking in very evil part, answered with indignation, and rejecting the ambassadors of Zingis, said, "Doth my servant demand my daughter? Get ye

out of my sight, and tell your master, if he ever make such demand again, I will make him die a miserable death."

But King Zingis, levying a great army, marched boldly, and encamped in a certain great plain named Tanduc, sending unto the king, and signifying unto him that he should defend himself; but he, commanding a mighty army, descended to the plains, and pitched his tent within ten miles of the camp of the Tartars. Then Zingis commanded his astrologers to show him what event and success the battle should have. They, cutting a reed lengthwise in two parts, stuck the pieces by themselves into the ground, and wrote upon the one Zingis, and the other Umcan, and said unto the king, In the mean space while we read, it shall come to pass, by the idol's power, that these two parts of the reed shall fight together, and whose part shall fall on the other, the king shall obtain victory in the battle. The multitude therefore running together to behold that spectacle, the astrologers began to mumble their prayers, and read their enchantments; when presently the parts of the reed being moved, fought together, until the part of Zingis ascended upon the part of Umcan; which being seen by the Tartars, assured of the future victory, they were encouraged to the battle, and Umcan being slain, the victory and kingdom, and Umcan's daughter, remained to Zingis.

Zingis reigned six years after this, in which he conquered many provinces; and lastly, when he endeavoured to win a certain castle called Thaigin, and came somewhat too near, being shot in the knee by an arrow,

he died, and was buried in the mountain Altai. The first king of the Tartars was called Zingis, the second Khen-Khan, the third Bathyn-Khan, the fourth Efu-Khan, the fifth Mangu-Khan, the sixth Kublai-Khan, whose power is greater than all his predecessors, having inherited theirs, and adding by conquest in a manner the rest of the world; for he lived near sixty years in his government. The name Khan signifieth Emperor. All the Great Khans and Princes of the blood of Zingis are carried to the mountain of Altai to be buried, where-soever they die, although one hundred days' journey from it; and they which carry the corpse to the burial kill all those that they meet in the way, saying, "Go and serve our Lord the King in another life;" they kill also the best horses. When the body of the Great Khan-Mangu, the predecessor of Khan-Kublai, was brought unto the mountain Altai to be buried, the soldiers accompanying the funeral are reported to have slain above ten thousand men upon the aforesaid occasion.

The Tartarian women are most faithful to their husbands. Adultery is the greatest shame amongst them; yet it is accounted lawful and honest that every one may marry as many wives as he is able to maintain, although the first be looked upon as principal, and more honourable than the rest. These live together in one house, without one ill word, in admirable concord, make their merchandises, buy and sell, and procure all things necessary to their husbands and household, the men meddling with nothing but their hunting, hawking, and things pertaining to arms.

They have the best falcons in the world, and also dogs; they live only on flesh and milk, and what they take in hunting. They eat horses, camels, dogs, if fat; and drink mares' milk, called cosmos, so managed that it is like white wine. If the father dies, the son may have all his wives, except his own mother and sisters; so the brother being dead, it is lawful for the brother who remaineth alive to marry the widow of his deceased brother. The husbands receive no dowry of the wives, but they themselves assign dowry to the wives and their mothers. Through the multitude of their wives, the Tartars have many children; nor is this multitude burthensome, seeing they gain much through their labour; besides, they are very careful for the government of the family and the preparation of their food, and with no less care execute the other duties of the house; but the men apply themselves wholly to hunting, fowling, and the exercise of arms.

The Tartars feed many herds of oxen, flocks of sheep, and other beasts and cattle, and remain with them in places of pasture, in the summer time, in the mountains and colder places, where they find pasture and wood; but in the winter they remove to the hotter countries, where they find pasture for their cattle, marching forwards two or three months together. Their houses are covered with sticks and felts, and are commonly round, which they carry with them in carts or waggons, with four wheels; for they can fold and extend them, set them up and take them down; and they turn, where-soever they go, the door of those movable houses always to the south. They have also neat carts of two

wheels, covered with felt, so close that the rain cannot pierce through them, drawn by oxen and camels, wherein they carry their wives, children, and necessary household stuff, and defend them from the injury of foul weather and rain.

The Tartars, if they be rich, are clothed in sables, ermines, and cloth of gold, and all their furniture is costly. Their arms are bows, swords, poleaxes, and some lances; but they can best use their bows, to which they are used from their childhood: they are hardy active, brave, but somewhat cruel; will continue two days and nights on horseback, armed, exceeding patient, and obedient to their lords; their cattle also are strong and hardy. The law and faith of the Tartars is this: they say that there is one Great God, supreme in heaven, of whom, with daily incense, they desire good understanding and health. They have another which they call Natigay, which is a little image covered with felt, or some other thing, which every one hath in his house. To this god they make a wife and children, placing the wife's image at the left hand, and the representations of the children before his face. This they call the god of earthly things, which keeps their children, and their beasts, and corn, and give it great reverence. Before they eat themselves, they anoint the mouths of the images with fat of the sodden flesh; and they cast the broth out of doors, in honour of other spirits, saying that now their god with his family has had their part, and after they eat and drink at pleasure.

If the son of a Tartar die before he has been married, and the daughter of another die also unmarried, the

parents of the deceased meet together, and celebrate a marriage between the dead, and, making a draught in writing of that contract, they paint men and women for servants, horses, and other creatures, with clothes of all sorts, and moneys in paper, and burn them together with the contract; by the smoke whereof they say that all these things are carried to their children in another world, where they are married; and the fathers and mothers conceive they are joined together in such a bond of affinity as if these marriages had been celebrated while the married couple were still living.

When the Tartars go to war, their Prince conducts about a hundred thousand horse, appointing heads over tens, hundreds, thousands, and ten thousands, by which subordination commands are easily maintained; every hundred is called a *tuc*, every ten a *toman*: when they begin their march, they send out men every way as scouts, that no enemy assault them unprovided. Of horses and mares, every man has about eighteen. They carry also their felt-houses, under which they shelter themselves in times of rain. When there falls out some important employment, they will ride ten days together without victuals, dry or boiled, and live on the blood of their horses, cutting a vein, and sucking it. They have milk dried like paste, which they make by boiling the milk, and skimming the cream which swims on the top into another vessel, and make butter; afterwards they set the milk in the sun and dry it, and, when they go to the army, carry with them about ten pounds thereof, and every morning a man takes about half a pound, and puts it in a flask, or

leather bottle, with as much water as he pleases, which, while he rides, mixes together, and this is his dinner.

When they encounter with their enemies, they ride here and there shooting, and sometimes make a show of flight, shooting as they fly; and finding the enemy broken, rejoin their forces, and pursue the victory, having their horses so at command as with a sign to turn any way. But now the Tartars are mixed and confounded, and so are their fashions. They punish malefactors after this manner: If any steal a thing of small value, and is not to be deprived of life, he is seven times beaten with a cudgel, or seventeen, or seven-and-twenty, or thirty-and-seven, or forty-seven, giving the strokes according to the measure and quality of the offence, and that unto a hundred; some die through these strokes. But if any have stolen a horse, or other thing for the which he deserves to die, he is cut asunder with a sword in the middle; but if he will redeem his life, he may, by restoring the theft nine-fold. Such as have horses, oxen, or camels, brand them with their marks, and send them to feed in the pastures without a keeper. Leaving the city of Caracarum and the mountain Altai, we come unto the champaign country of Bargu, which extends itself northwards about sixty days' journey in length. The inhabitants of these places are called Medites, and they are subject to the Great Khan, and in manners like the Tartars; they are a sort of savage men, and eat the flesh of beasts which they take by hunting, especially stags, of which they have plenty, and they make them so tame that they can ride them; they have

no corn or wine. In the summer they chiefly practise hunting of wild beasts and fowls, on the flesh whereof they may live in the winter; for in winter, fowls, as well as other living things, fly from thence on account of the extremity of the cold.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE VAST COUNTRIES TO THE NORTHWARD OF TARTARY, AND MANY OTHER CURIOUS PARTICULARS.

AFTER forty days' journey you come to the ocean, near which is a mountain, where storks and fine falcons breed, which are carried thence unto the court of the Great Khan. Here we must return unto the city Campion; if therefore you proceed farther five days' journey from the city Campion towards the east, you come to the kingdom of Erginul, in the province of Tangut, subject to the Great Khan. In this kingdom are many idolaters; there are some Nestorian Christians and Turks, as also many cities and castles, of which Erginul is chief. From hence, if you proceed farther to the south-east, you may go to the parts of Cathay. Going south-east towards Cathay, there is a certain famous city named Cinguy, the name also of the province tributary unto the Great Khan contained in Tangut. The people are some Christians, some Mohammedans, and others idolaters. There are also found wild oxen, very near as big as elephants, very fair, having white and black hair, short in other parts, and on the shoulder three palms long, fine, white, and in many respects beyond silk, of which hair our author

brought some to Venice as a rare thing. Many also of these oxen are tamed, and made to couple with tame kine, and the breed of them are fitter for business than any other countries, bear great burthens, are yoked to the plough, and do twice as much service as others.

The best musk in the world is found in this province, and is taken from a beast of the bigness of a goat, having hair like a stag, feet and tail like a gazelle, but without horns. It hath four teeth, two above and two beneath, of the length of three fingers, as white as ivory, and is a very beautiful creature. When the moon is at full, near the navel, under the belly, there grows to this beast an imposthume or bladder, full of blood, and at the full moon they go to hunt them, and take away that swelling, which is dried in the sun, and is the best musk; the flesh is also good to eat. Master Marco brought to Venice the head and feet of this beast dried. The men live by merchandise and arts and have abundance of corn. They are idolaters, of a fat body and little nose, black hair, having no beard, but four hairs on their chin. The women are wonderfully fair, and when the men desire to marry wives, they rather make choice of the beautiful than the noble or rich. It often happens from hence that a great nobleman marries a poor wife, if beautiful, assigning a dowry to her mother. This province extends itself five-and-twenty days' journey in length, and is very fertile; in it are exceeding large pheasants, having trains eight or ten handfuls long; many other kinds of birds are also found there, which have very beautiful feathers of various excellent colours.

After eight days' journey further east, you meet with the province Egrigaia, in the which are many cities and castles; all but this lies still in Tangut. The principal city is called Callacia, the inhabitants thereof are idolaters; there are three churches of Nestorian Christians, who are subject to the Great Khan. In this city camblets are made, woven with white wool, and the hair of camels, than which there are scarce any better in the world. East from this province of Egrigaia lies that of Tandach, in which are many cities and castles, and here Presbyter John resides, who now pays tribute to the Great Khan. The king of that nation is called George, and is a priest and a Christian, and most of the people are Christians. All the Great Khans after his death (who was slain in battle by Zingis) give their daughters to those kings to wife. This King George holds not all that the priest John before held, and is the fourth of that family. There is a nation there called Argons, more sightly men, and fitter for merchandise than the rest, descended of idolaters and Mohammedans. There are also two regions where they dwell, which in those parts are called Og and Magog; but they which dwell there call them Ung and Mongul; in Ung are Gog, and in Mongul the Tartars. Riding east seven days towards Cathay are many cities peopled with idolaters, Mohammedans, and Nestorians. There is one city called Sindicin, where very excellent arms are made of divers sorts fit for armies. In the mountains of this province are great mines of silver, and much game, and the country of the mountains is called Idifa.

Three days' journey from the city last mentioned stands another city Jangamur, that is, the White Lake, where there is a palace, in which the Great Khan delights, because there are many lakes and rivers, many swans, and in the plains, cranes, pheasants, partridges, and other fowls. There are five sorts of cranes there; some have black wings like crows, others are white and bright, having their feathers full of eyes like peacocks, but of a golden colour, the neck black and white; very beautiful. A third sort for bigness not unlike ours; a fourth little, and very fair, intermingled with red and blue colours; the fifth of a grizzle, or grey colour, having red and black heads, and these are very large; and near to this city lies a valley, where are many cottages, in which a great number of partridges are maintained, which are kept against the king's coming to lodge there for some time. Three days' journey north-eastward is the city Ciandu, which the Great Khan Kublay now reigning built, erecting therein a marvellous palace of marble and other stones, which extends to the wall on the one side, and the middle of the city on the other. He included sixteen miles within the circuit of the wall on that side where the palace joins the city wall, into which none can enter but by the palace. In this inclosure or park are pleasant meadows, springs, rivers, red and fallow deer, fawns, carried thither for the hawks, of which are mewed there about two hundred ger-falcons, which he goes once a week to see; and he often useth one leopard or more, sitting on horses, with which he hunts the stag and deer, and having taken the best, gives it to the

ger-falcons, and in beholding this spectacle he takes much delight. In the midst of a fair wood he hath built a royal house on pillars gilded and varnished, on every one of which is a dragon all gilt, which winds his tail about the pillar, with his head bearing up the roof, as also with his wings displayed on both sides; the cover also is of reeds gilt and varnished so that the rain can do it no injury, the reeds being three handfuls thick and ten yards long, split from knot to knot; the house itself also may be pulled in pieces, and taken down like a tent, and erected again, for it is sustained when it is set up with two hundred silken cords. The Great Khan useth to dwell there three months in the year, viz., June, July, and August. On the 28th day of August he departeth to make a solemn sacrifice. He hath an herd of white horses and white mares, about ten thousand, of the milk whereof none may drink, except he be of the imperial race of Zingis-Khan, and except one family called Boriat who had this granted by Zingis for their valour; and these beasts, as they go up and down feeding, are much revered, nor dare any go before them, or hinder them in their way.

The astrologers or sorcerers tell the Khan, that on the twentieth of the moon of August, he shall disperse that milk here and there for the honour of all spirits, and his idols, that they may be careful preservers of all things which he possesses. There are two sorts of idolaters called Chebeth and Chesmu, which in the midst of storms ascend the palace, and suffer no rain to fall thereon, which they make the people believe

comes to pass by their sanctity, and therefore they go slovenly and negligent of their persons, never washing nor combing themselves. They also have a horrible custom to dress and eat such as are condemned to death, but not those which die naturally. They are called also Bachsi, which is the name of their order, as friars, predicants, or minors with us; they seem by magic to do what they list. When the Great Khan in his hall sits at his table, it is raised eight yards high; and in the midst of the hall, a good distance from the table, is a great cupboard of plate, from whence these sorcerers cause wine or milk to fill the goblets, without any hand touching them; this they do in the presence of any man, whenever their lord commands it. These Bachsi also, when they have a mind to make feasts to their idols, go to the Khan, and address him thus: "Sir, you are to know that if our idols be not honoured with sacrifices, they will bring plagues on corn and beasts, and therefore we entreat you to give us the flesh of so many sheep, with black heads, and so many pounds of incense, and lignum aloes, that we may make them due sacrifice and honour." This they spake not to him themselves, but by certain lords deputed to that office, who speak to the Khan, and obtain it. On the feast day, they sacrifice these beasts, and sprinkle the broth before the idols.

They have great monasteries, some of the bigness of a city, in several of which are about two thousand monks, who serve an idol sequestered from the laity, as appears by their shaving and garments; for they shave their heads and beards, and wear a religious

garment. These, in the solemnities of their idols, sing with solemn songs, and lights; some of them may marry. There are some who observe strict abstinence, called Sensim, leading an austere life; for they eat nothing but meal mingled with water, till all the flour be gone, and eat the bran without any savour. These worship the fire; and the men of other rules say, that these, which are so austere, are heretics against their law, because they worship not idols as they do; and there are great differences between them, and these marry not at all. They shave their head and beard, wear black hempen garments, or of a bright yellow. They sleep on thick mats, and live the severest life in the world.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE GREAT POWER OF CUBLAI-KHAN, OF HIS GOVERNMENT, FAMILY, DOMINIONS, ETC.

IN this book I purpose to write all the great and marvellous acts of the present Khan, called Cublai-Khan, which is, if expressed in our tongue, Lord of Lords, the greatest prince in people, cities, and treasures, that ever was in the world, he being descended from the progeny of Zingis, the first prince of the Tartars, the sixth emperor of that country, beginning to reign in the year of our Lord 1256, being twenty-seven years old, and ruling the people with great wisdom and gravity. He is a valiant man, exercised in arms, strong of body, and of a lofty mind, for the performance of matters before he attained to the dignity of the empire, which by his wisdom he

did, against the will of his brethren. He often showed himself a valiant soldier in the wars, and carried himself like a wiser and bolder captain than ever the Tartars had; yet since he swayed the kingdom, he went but once into the field, and sends his sons and other captains on expeditions.

In the year of our Lord 1286, his uncle, whose name was Naiam, being thirty years of age, and having the command of many people and countries, so that he was able easily to bring together four hundred thousand horse, being puffed up through youthful vanity, would no longer be subject, but would needs take away the kingdom from his Lord Cublai, and sent to another great lord named Cadu, Lord of the parts towards Great Turkey, who was nephew of the Emperor Cublai, yet hated him, who, yielding to his motion for rebellion, promised to come in person with a hundred thousand horse.

Both of them began to gather forces, which could not be done so secretly but Cublai heard of it, and presently took order to set guards on the ways that no intelligence might pass, and then assembled all the forces within ten days' journey of Cambalu with great speed, so that in twenty days were gathered together three hundred and sixty thousand horse, and one hundred thousand foot, a great part of them falconers, and men of his household. With these he made haste day and night towards Naiam's country, where, at the end of twenty-five days, he arrived, altogether unlooked for, and rested his men two days; then he called his astrologers, and caused them, before all the army,

to divine who should have victory ; a thing they use to encourage their men, and they promised it to Cublai. One morning, while Naiam was sleeping negligently in his tent, having not so much as sent out any scouts to gain intelligence, Cublai made show of his army upon a hill, himself sat in a certain castle of wood full of archers and cross-bow men, borne by four elephants, on the top whereof was the royal standard, with the images of the sun and moon. He divided his army into three bodies, of which he sent that on the right hand, and the other on the left against Naiam's army. To every ten thousand horse were assigned five hundred foot, with lances, taught to leap up behind the horsemen, if any occasion of flight happened, and suddenly, on advantage, to alight, and kill the enemies' horses with their lances. Caydu was not yet come.

The battles joined, and made a cruel fight, which continued from morning till noon, and then was Naiam taken and brought before Cublai, who commanded that he should be sewed betwixt two carpets, which should be tossed up and down till the breath was out of his body, that so the imperial blood might not be exposed to the sun or to the air. The remainder of his people swore obedience to Cublai, which were four nations, Ciazza, Carli, Barscol, and Sitingui. Naiam was secretly baptised, and by profession a Christian, but no follower of the works of faith, yet he signed his principal ensign with the sign of the cross, having with him infinite numbers of Christians who were all slain.

The Jews and the Saracens that were in the army of

Cublai, began to upbraid the Christians with this disaster of the cross, who complained of it to Cublai; he sharply reproved the Jews and Saracens for this behaviour, and then turning to the Christians, he said, "Surely, your God and his cross would not give any aid to Naiam; but be not you therefore ashamed, because God being good and just ought not to defend injustice or iniquity. Naiam was a traitor to his Lord, and contrary to all equity, raised rebellion, and sought the help of your God in his mischievous purpose; but he, as a good and upright God, would not favour his designs."

He returned after this with great triumph to Cambula, and stayed there till Easter. On that day he called the Christians before him, and kissed their gospels, and made his barons do the same. He does the like on the great feasts of the Saracens, Jews, and Heathens, that Segomamber-Khan, the God of the idols, Mohammed, Moses, or whosoever is greatest in heaven, might help him; yet he made best show of liking to the Christian faith, but pretended the ignorance of the Nestorian priests, and the mighty acts of the sorcerers, hindered his professing it.

For the better rewarding his soldiers, he kept twelve barons or counsellors, who gave him notice of each captain's merit; and accordingly he raised them from the command of one hundred to a thousand, and from one thousand to ten thousand, and so on, giving them vessels of plate and tablets. The captain of one hundred hath a tablet of silver; and the captain of a thousand of gold, or silver gilded; the captain of ten

thousand has a tablet of gold, and a lion's head on it. The weight of the tablets differs also according to the dignity. On the said tablet is written a command in this manner: "By the strength and power of the great God, and by the grace which he hath given to our empire, the name of Khan be blessed, and let them all die and be destroyed which will not obey him." All officers who have these tablets have privileges in writing of all things, which they are to do and demand; and the generals when they ride in public have a cloth borne over their heads, and when they sit, it is on a chair of silver. Their tablet is of three hundred sagi, which is equal to fifty ounces of gold, with the images of the sun and moon; such as have a tablet with a ger-falcon thereon, may take with them for their guard the whole army of a great commander. Cublai is a comely handsome man, of middle stature, of a very fresh complexion, black and bright eyes, well fashioned nose, and all the lineaments of his body consisting of due proportion. He has four wives, who are esteemed lawful, and the first born of them is to succeed him in the kingdom, and every one of them is called Empress, and holdeth a peculiar court, and that in a magnificent palace, having about three hundred women to attend her, and many eunuch servants, and at least ten thousand persons in their families.

The Grand Khan hath also many concubines. There is likewise a nation of fair people among the Tartars called Virgut, where every second year he sends ambassadors to make search for the fairest young women for him; who returning, bring him four or five hun-

dred more or less, as they see cause. There are examiners appointed to take a view of all their beauties, examining eyes, nose, mouth, &c., apart, and set a price on them at sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, or more carats, and they bring those of that rate which their commission appoints; these he causes to be received by other examiners, and of so many perhaps chooses thirty of the chief for his chamber, which he puts to some of his barons' wives to see if they snore not in their sleep, or if in behaviour they be not offensive; those which are approved are by fives divided, each fifth part waiting three days and nights in his chamber by course, the other in the next lodgings preparing whatsoever these command them. The less prized are put to cookery and other offices; and sometimes the Khan bestows them on gentlemen, with great portions. The men of that country esteem it a grace and credit to have daughters worthy his liking; and think themselves born under an ill planet if they are not kept when sent to court.

Cublai had two-and-twenty sons by his four legitimate wives, and the first-born of his first wife was called Zingis, who would have succeeded him in the empire if he had not died before his father. He left a son named Timur, a valiant man, wise, and experienced in arms, who is to succeed his grandfather in the empire, instead of his deceased father; but by his concubines he hath five-and-twenty sons, all which are daily exercised in feats of arms, and are great lords; seven of his sons by his wives are Kings of great provinces, and maintain their states with great reputation.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF HIS PALACE IN THE CITY OF CAMBALU, A PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THAT CITY, AND OTHER REMARKABLE OBSERVATIONS.

THREE months of the year, that is December, January, and February, Cublai resides ordinarily in Cambalu, which is at the north-east border of Cathay; and there, on the south part by the new city, is seated a great palace: first there is a great wall, each square being eight miles, with a deep ditch environing, and a gate in the middle of each; after which is the space of a mile in circuit, where soldiers stand; after this is another court of six miles square, with three gates on the south square, and three on the north; that which is in the midst being in both the greater, and kept shut, except when the Khan passeth that way; the other is always open to others; in each corner of this wall, and in the midst is a fair palace, eight in all, very large, in which are kept the Khan's annunitions, and furniture of all sorts; horses in one; in another bows and shooting artillery; in a third castlets, cuirasses, and leather armour; and so in the rest.

Within this circuit is another walk like the former, very thick and ten paces high, all the battlements white, the walls square, each square a mile in length, with six gates as the former, and eight palaces also very large, wherein are the Khan's provisions; between these two last walls are also many fair trees and meadows, in which are deer with other game, and store of grass, the paths being raised two cubits to spare it;

no dirt or puddles of water being therein. Within this last wall is the palace of the Great Khan, the greatest that hath been seen extending to the wall on the north and south, and opening where the barons and soldiers pass. It hath no ceiling, but a very high roof; the foundation of the pavement ten palms high, with a wall of marble round about it two paces wide, as it were a walk. At the end of the wall without is a fair turret with pillars. In the walls of the halls and chambers are carved dragons, soldiers, birds, beasts of divers kinds, histories of wars gilded; the roof is so made that nothing is seen but gold and imagery; in every square of the palace is a great hall, capable of holding a multitude of people; the chambers are disposed the best that may be devised. The roof is red, green, azure, and of all colours. Behind the palace are great rooms and private storehouses for his treasure and jewels, for his women, and other private purposes.

Over against the said palace of the Khan is another for Zingis his son, whose court was in all things like his father's. Near this palace towards the north is a mount made by hand, a mile in compass, one hundred paces high, adorned with trees that are always green; unto this mountain the King commands all the trees to be brought from remote parts, lading elephants with them, for they are taken up with the roots, and are transplanted in this mountain; and because this mountain is always green, it is called the Green Mountain: and where the earth of the mount was taken away are two lakes answering each other, with a small

river supplying them with stored fish, and so grated that the fish cannot get out.

The city of Cambalu in the province of Cathay, seated on a great river, was famous, and the royal seat in ancient times; and this name Cambalu signifies the city of the Lord or Prince. This city the Great Khan removed to the other side of the river where the palaces are, for he understood by the astrologers that it would rebel against the empire. This new-built city is called Taidu, and he commanded all the Cathayans to go out of the old city into the new; which contains in compass four-and-twenty miles, every side of the square containing six miles. It hath walls of earth ten paces thick at the bottom, and at the top but three, as growing by little and little thinner. The battlements are white; every square of the wall hath three principal gates, which are twelve in all, having sumptuous palaces built over them. There are also certain pavilions in the angles of the walls where the arms of the garrison, which are one thousand at each gate, are kept. The buildings are squared, and the streets laid very straight by line throughout the city; so that from one gate a free prospect opens throughout the city to the opposite gate; having very stately houses built on both sides like palaces with gardens and courts, divided according to the heads of families. In the midst of the city is a certain noble building, wherein hangeth a very great bell; after the tolling whereof in the night no man must go out of his house until the beginning of the day following, except it be for some extraordinary cause, as for a woman in

travail, and then they are compelled to carry lights with them.

Without the city of Cambalu are twelve large suburbs, three or four miles long, adjoining to each of the twelve gates, more inhabiting in the suburbs than in the city; here merchants and strangers live, each nation having several store-houses, or burses, in which they lodge. No dead corpse of any man is burned within this city, but the bodies of idolaters are burned without the suburbs, where the dead bodies of other sects are buried; and because a huge multitude of Saracens inhabit there, they have above twenty-five thousand harlots in the suburbs and in the city; and these have a chief captain appointed over every hundred and thousand, and one general, whose office is that when any ambassadors come, or such as have business with the Khan, whose charges he defrays, then this captain giveth every ambassador, and every man of his family, a change of women every night at free cost, for this is their tribute. The guards, every night, carry such to prison whom they find walking late; and if they be found guilty, they are beaten with cudgels, for the Bachsi tell them that it is not good to shed man's blood; but many die of these beatings. The Great Khan hath in his court twelve thousand horsemen, which they call Casitan, faithful soldiers of their lord, who guard his person, more for state than fear; and four captains have the charge of these, whereof every one commandeth three thousand. When one captain, with three thousand soldiers within the palace, hath guarded the King for three days and nights, another

captain with his soldiers succeeds; and so, throughout the year, this course of watching by turns is observed.

When on account of any festival day he keeps a solemn court, his table, which is higher than the rest of the tables, is set at the north part of the hall, his face is to the south, having the first Queen on his left hand, that is, his principal wife; and his sons and nephews, and those of the royal blood, on his right; yet their table is in a lower place, so that they scarce touch the King's feet with their hands, the seat of the eldest being higher than the rest; the Princes sit in a lower place than that; their wives also observe the like order: first, the Khan's sons' wives and his kinsmen sit lower on the left hand, and after those of the lords, and of every captain and nobleman, each in their degree and order; and the Emperor himself, while he sits at his table, may cast his eyes upon all that feast with him in that hall. There are not tables for them all to sit; but the greatest part of the soldiers and barons eat on carpets. At all the doors stand two gigantic fellows with cudgels, to see that none touch the threshold, which, if he does, they take his garments away, which he must redeem by receiving so many blows as shall be appointed, or else lose them. They who serve the King, and those sitting at the table, all of them cover their mouths with silk, lest their breathing should by any means touch the King's meat or drink, and when he hath a mind to drink, the damsel who giveth it goes back three paces and kneels down, and then the barons and all the people kneel, and the musicians sound their instruments. There is no cause, since

I would avoid prolixity, why I should write anything concerning the meats which are brought to the table, how dainty and delicate they are, and with what magnificence and pomp they are served in.

All the Tartars observe this custom, to celebrate the birthday of their lord most honourably. The birthday of Cublai is kept the 28th of September, and this day he accounteth more solemn than any in the whole year, except the first of February, on which they begin the year. The King, therefore, on his birthday, is clothed in a most precious garment of gold, and about two thousand barons and soldiers are clothed in the same colour of gold, though of silk stuff, and a girdle wrought in gold and silver, which is given them, with a pair of shoes. Some wear pearls and garments of great price, who are next to the Khan; and these garments are not worn but on thirteen solemn feasts, according to the thirteen moons of the year; all are then clothed like Kings. This custom is also observed by the Tartars, that on the birthday of the Great Khan, all the kings, princes, and nobles, who are subject to his dominions, should send presents unto him, as to their Emperor; and they who desire to attain any place of dignity or office of him offer their petitions unto twelve barons appointed for that purpose; and what they decree is all one as if the Emperor himself had answered them. All people also, of what faith or sect soever, whether Christians or Jews, Saracens or Tartars, and Pagans, are bound solemnly to call upon their gods, for the life, safety, and prosperity of the Great Khan.

On the first of February, which is the beginning of the Tartar year, the Great Khan, and all the Tartars, wheresoever they are, celebrate a very solemn feast, and all, as well men as women, desire to be clothed in white garments as a token of good luck; therefore, that fortune may favour them all the year, they wear white at the beginning thereof. The rulers of cities, and governors of provinces, mindful of their duty, send unto their Emperor this day presents of gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, many white clothes, and other white things, and many horses of a white colour. The rest of the Tartars, at the beginning of the year, send white presents one to another. It is the custom of those who bring presents, if they can, of each to present nine times nine; as, if they send horses, to present nine nines, that is eighty-one; and so of gold, of cloths, and other things; that sometimes he hath, by this reckoning, one hundred thousand horses. Also at this happy season, all the elephants which the Emperor hath (five thousand in number) are brought into the court, covered with tapestry, the similitudes of divers beasts and fowls being portrayed thereon, carrying upon their shoulders chests full of gold and silver vessels; many camels are also brought, covered with fine silken cloths, which bring other things necessary for the court.

On this day, in the morning, all the King's captains, barons, soldiers, physicians, astrologers, and governors of provinces and armies, and other officers of the empire, assemble in the great hall before the King, and they who happen to have no place there, for the

multitude stand in another place, where they may see them, all being placed in their order and degree. One riseth, who is amongst their clergy as a prelate, and crieth with a loud voice, "Bow down and adore," and presently all do reverence, bending down their foreheads to the earth; then he saith, "God preserve our lord with long life and joy;" and all answer, "God grant;" then he saith, "God increase and advance his empire, and preserve his subjects in peace, concord, and prosperity;" and all answer, "God grant;" and this they do four times; then the adoration being finished, the same prelate goes to an altar, richly adorned, on which is a red table, whereon is written the name of the Khan; and taking a censer, and putting spices therein, they perfume the table and the altar with great reverence in honour of the Great Khan, and so return to their places; after which are offered the gifts of which we have spoken; and then the tables are prepared, and a most solemn dinner held, eating and drinking with great joy with their wives, in manner before described. And, lastly, a tame lion is brought to the King, which, lying at his feet like a gentle whelp, acknowledgeth and caresses his lord.

In those three months in which we said before the Emperor resides in the city of Cambalu—viz., in December, January, and February—all the hunters which the Emperor hath in all his provinces round about the province of Cathay apply themselves to hunting, and bring all the larger wild beasts, such as stags, bears, roebucks, wild boars, and deer, to their governors, who, if they be distant from the Emperor's court less

than thirty days' journey, send such beasts as are taken by waggons or ships to the Emperor, having first bowelled them; but such as are forty days' distant from his court send only the skins, which are necessary for making of armour. He hath many leopards and wolves for hunting, and many lions also, greater than those which are in Babylon, in the hair whereof certain little beams appear of divers colours, viz., white, black, and red, and they are bred to catch bears, boars, stags, roebucks, wild asses, and wild oxen, and it is marvellous to see the lion's fierceness and dexterity in this sort of hunting; two lions are commonly carried in one wagon when they go to hunt, and with them a dog, with which they are tamed; and they carry them in this fashion because of their fury and unruliness; and they must carry them contrary to the wind, for else the beasts would scent them and flee. He hath also many tame eagles, which are so taught that they take hares, roebucks, deer, and foxes; among which some of them fear not to seize upon wolves, and vex them so grievously that without labour and danger they may be taken by them.

The Khan hath in his court two which are brethren, one called Boyan, the other Mingan; called in the Tartar language Ciurco, that is, masters of the game; each of them hath the command of ten thousand men. They which are under one of them are clothed in red; the others in sky colour; when they hunt, these keep diverse sorts of dogs, to the number of five thousand mastiffs and others. In hunting they go with their people, one on the right hand, and the other on the left;

and the King and they take up so great a length of the plain that from one end to the other is a day's journey, so that no beast can escape them; and it is great pleasure, when the Khan goes in the midst, to see the dogs follow hares, bears, and all other wild beasts. These brethren are bound by covenant, from the beginning of October to the end of March, to bring to the court one thousand head of beasts and birds, besides quails and fishes, the best they can, in such proportion.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE COURT OF THE GRAND KHAN, AND OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF HIS SUBJECTS.

THE month of March coming in, the Great Khan departeth from the city of Cambalu, and proceedeth north-eastward towards the ocean, distant thence two days' journey, bringing with him about ten thousand falconers, who have falcons, hawks, ger-falcons, and other kind of fowls of prey, fit for hawking. These falcons disperse themselves by a hundred or two hundred in a company, and the birds that are taken for the most part are brought unto the King, who, by reason of his gout, sitteth in a wooden house, which two elephants carry, covered with the skins of lions, and within hung with cloth of gold, having with him for his recreation twelve choice hawks and twelve courtiers; many noblemen and soldiers ride by, who guard the King's person, who when they see pheasants or cranes, or other birds flying in the air, speak to the falconers,

who are near the King, and they signify the same unto the King, uncover the King's house, and let their falcons and hawks fly, and the King, sitting on his bed, beholds the pastime of the birds. Other ten thousand men go also with the King, who in that hawking run hither and thither, by two and two, and mark whither the falcon and hawks fly that are cast from the fist, that if need be they may help them; and these in the Tartar language are called Toscaol, that is to say, watchmen or marksmen, being skilful in a certain kind of whistle, wherewith they call in the hawks that are flown; nor is it needful that the falconer, who lets the hawks fly, should follow them, seeing those of whom I now speak are busily employed in taking up the hawks, and are careful that by no means they are hurt or lost; and every flying hawk carrieth a little table of silver on her foot, signed with the mark of her master or falconer, that if she be lost she may be restored to her owner.

But if the mark cannot be known, the hawk is delivered to a certain baron, who for this cause is called Bulangazi, to whom are brought all lost things (otherwise the finder would be punished as a thief), and to him losers resort to inquire of things lost. He hath a most eminent place noted by his ensign, that in so great an assembly of people he may always be known. While they are thus busied in sporting and hawking, they come into a certain great plain called Carzar-modin, where the tents of the King and all the courtiers are prepared, about ten thousand in number.

The first is the Khan's pavilion, under which ten

thousand soldiers stand, besides barons and noblemen, with the door to the south, sustained by three pillars, wrought with curious and excellent carved work, and covered with the skins of lions and other wild beasts, which keep out rain; but within, the walls of the pavilion are covered with most costly skins of ermines and sables, although in those countries these skins are accounted most precious, so that sometimes skins worth two thousand sultanines of gold are scarce sufficient for one pair of vests. The Tartars call the sable the queen of furs; the cords wherewith these pavilions are supported are of silk. There are also other pavilions erected, wherein the wives, sons, and concubines of the King remain. Further also the falcons, hawks, ger-falcons, and other birds, which serve for hawking, have their tents; for there is so great a multitude of tents that to them that come thither it seems at a distance as if a famous city was built there.

The King remains all March in that plain, and takes innumerable beasts and infinite multitudes of fowl; for no man may in this time hunt in all the provinces of that kingdom, at the least within five days' journey one way, ten another, and fifteen a third way, of the Khan's court, nor keep a hunting dog or a hawk from the beginning of March until the month of October. No man is permitted to use any device or engine whatsoever to take stags, deer, roebucks, or hares, lest he should hinder their breed; and hence it is that there is such plenty of game. It is incredible what multitudes of people, merchants, and merchandises of all sorts are seen in Cambalu. The money

of the Great Khan is not made of gold or silver, or other metal; but they take the middle bark from the mulberry tree, and this they make firm, and cut into divers round pieces, great and little, and imprint the King's mark thereon; of this paper money therefore the Emperor, causeth a huge mass to be made in the city of Cambalu, which sufficeth for the whole empire, and no man under pain of death may coin any other, or spend any other money, or refuse it in all his kingdoms and countries, nor any coming from another kingdom dare spend any other money in the empire of the Great Khan. Hence it follows that merchants often coming from remote countries unto the city of Cambalu bring with them gold, silver, pearl, and precious stones, and receive the King's money for them; and because this money is not received in their country, they change it again, in the empire of the Great Khan, for merchandise, which they carry away with them. He also payeth stipends to his officers and army in the above-mentioned money. And, lastly, whatever thing he needs in his court, he buyeth with this money. Wherefore there is not a King to be found in the world who exceedeth him in treasure, not expended on the mint, as elsewhere.

The Great Khan hath twelve barons, as is said, before which are the council of war, who dispose of martial affairs, and the exalting or disgracing of captains or soldiers. Their office is called Thai, that is, the high court, because they have none above them but the Khan. Other twelve barons are appointed counsellors for the four-and-thirty provinces, which have a

fair palace in Cambalu, in which is for every province a judge and many notaries. These have power to choose governors of the said provinces, and present their names to the Khan, who confirms them. These also have the charge of the treasure to collect and dispense the same; their office is called Singh, that is, the second court, subject to none but the Khan, yet reputed less noble than the former, that being a military establishment.

There are many public roads from the city of Cambalu, which conduct to the neighbouring provinces, and in every one of them, at the end of five-and-twenty or thirty miles, are lodgings or inns built, called lambs, that is, post-houses, with large and fair courts, chambers furnished with beds and other provisions, every way fit to entertain great men, nay even to lodge a King. The provisions are laid in from the country adjacent; there are about four hundred horses, which are in readiness for messengers and ambassadors, who there leave their tired horses, and take fresh; and in mountainous places, where are no villages, he sends people to inhabit, about ten thousand at a place, where these lambs or post-houses are built, and they cultivating the ground for their provisions. These excellent regulations continue unto the utmost limits of the empire, so that in the public ways throughout the whole empire about ten thousand of the King's inns are found; and the number of the horses appointed for the service of the messengers in those inns are more than two hundred thousand, a thing almost incredible; hence it is that in a little while, with change of men and horses,

intelligence comes without stop to the court; and if any wonder how so many men and beasts should be provided for, he must consider that the Moors and Gentiles have many women, and by them abundance of children, some having thirty sons, which follow them armed; and for victuals they sow three kinds of seeds rice, panike, and millet, which yield a hundred-fold. They make no bread, but boil these with milk or flesh. Wheat will not so increase with them, nor suffer they any ground which will bear to lie untilled; and the cattle continually increase, so that each of them carries with him six, eight, or more horses into the field for his own person. The horses are employed by turns, so that of the four hundred, two hundred are in the stables ready, the other two hundred at grass, each a month at a time. Their cities also that are adjoining to rivers or lakes are appointed to have ferry-boats in readiness for the posts, and cities on the borders of deserts are directed to have horses and provisions for the use of such as pass through those deserts; but have a reasonable allowance for this service of the Khan. In cases of great consequence, the post rides with a ger-falcon table, and is equipped so that he will ride two hundred miles in a day, or two hundred and fifty sometimes; also they ride all night, foot-posts running by them with lights if the moon does not shine.

They sound a horn, that the fresh horses may be brought forth for them to mount presently, and having their bellies and heads girded, they run as fast as the horse can go; and those which are able to endure this excessive riding are on that account in great reputation

among them, who admire nothing so much as horsemanship. There are also between these inns other habitations three or four miles distant one from another, in which there are a few houses, where foot-posts live, having each of them his girdle hung full of shrill sounding bells. These keep themselves always ready, and as often as the Khan's letters are sent to them, convey them speedily to the posts at the next village, who, hearing the sound of the foot-post coming when at a distance, expect him, and receive his letters, presently carry them to the next watch; and so the letters passing through several hands are conveyed without delay to the place whither they ought to come; and it often happens that the King by this learns news, or receives new fruits, from a place ten days' journey distant, in two days. As, for instance, fruits growing at Cambalu in the morning, by the next day at night are at Xandu; but all the before-mentioned posts are free from all tribute, and receive a great recompense for their labours from the King's rent-gatherers besides. Some also are appointed to examine these posts monthly, and to punish their faults if they are fairly convicted.

He sends yearly to the divers provinces of his empire to inquire whether any prejudice be done to the corn by tempests, locusts, worms, or any other means; and when he hath notice given him that any province or city hath sustained any damage, he remits his tribute to that people for that year, and sends grain for victual and for seed out of his own granaries; for in a time of great plenty the King buys abundance of corn, and keeps it with great care by his officers three or four

years in granaries that when there happens to be scarcity of corn in one country, that defect may be supplied out of the King's storehouses in another. He selleth his grain for a fourth part of the common price, and always provides that his storehouses are kept fully supplied. Likewise when any murrain lights among cattle, he sends them other cattle, which he has for tenths in other provinces; and if a thunderbolt has stricken any beast of any herd or flock, he receives no tribute from it for three years, let the herd be ever so great; neither will he receive any custom of a thunder-stricken sheep, as thinking God is angry with them that are so stricken.

Likewise that travellers may discern all places able to bear trees, he hath caused trees to be planted, at a convenient distance one from another, near the principal roads; and in the sandy and desert places he hath caused stones and pillars to be erected for that purpose, and officers are appointed to look to these things. He plants trees the rather because his astrologers tell him that planting trees lengthens the life of man. They make excellent drink, in the province of Cathay, of rice and divers spices, which in the taste thereof excels the flavour even of wine; and they who drink more greedily thereof than is fit, or the nature of the drinker can bear, become sooner intoxicated than if they had drunk wine.

Through the whole province of Cathay, certain black stones are dug out of the mountains, which, put into the fire, burn like wood, and, being kindled, preserve fire a long time, and, if they be kindled in the evening, they keep fire all the night; and many use those stones

because that though they have plenty of wood, yet is there such frequent use of stones and laths that the wood would not serve.

It is not amiss, having spoken of his provision abroad, to mention his care for the poor of Cambalu. When he hears of any honourable family decayed by misfortune, or of any which cannot work, and have no subsistence, he gives to such families the whole year's expenses, each head of such families going to the officer for that purpose, and, showing their bill of allowance, receive provisions accordingly. There is a place set apart for those officers; they are provided also with garments for winter and for summer. The Khan having the tenths of all wool, silk, and hemp, which he causes to be made into clothes, in a house for that purpose appointed; for all trades are bound one day in the week to work for him. He provides also apparel for his armies, and in every city causes cloth to be made of his tythe wool. You must understand that the Tartars, according to their ancient customs, bestowed no alms, but rather upbraided those that were in necessity, as hated of God; but the idolaters, especially those Bachsi, have propounded it as a good work acceptable unto God, and have taught him to be thus bountiful; so that in this court bread is never denied to any who ask it, and there is no day in which are not given away twenty thousand crowns in rice, millet, and panike; whence he is esteemed as a god by his subjects.

There are in Cambalu Christians, Saracens, and Catayans, about five thousand astrologers and diviners, which the Great Khan provideth yearly in food and

raiment, as he doth those poor abovesaid. These have an astrolabe, in which are marked the signs of the planets, the hours and points of all the year. Herein all those astrologers, each religion apart, view the course of the year according to every moon, observing the disposition of the weather, referring always to God to do more or less after His own pleasure. They write also upon certain squares they call Tacuini the things which are to come that year, which they sell to those that will buy them, and such as speak most truth are most honoured. If any intend any great work, or to go a far journey, and will know the event before hand, he has recourse to these astrologers, to see it with their eyes in the heavens, which they pretend to do, comparing the present constellation with that of his birth, which they demand of him; so foretelling him the good or evil. The Tartars reckon the computation of their years by twelves, the first signified by a lion, the second by an ox, the third by a dragon, the fourth by a dog, and so through the whole twelve; so that if it be demanded of a man when he was born, he will answer such a point of such an hour of such a day in the year Lion. This their fathers exactly set down in a book, and when the twelve is complete, they go over the same again.

Of their religion, we have said that they are idolaters; and for their gods have a table set aloft in the wall of their chamber, on which is written a name representing the high God of Heaven, and there every day with a censer of incense they adore it in this manner: they lift up their hands aloft, and strike their teeth thrice,

praying it to give them a good understanding and health, and desire thereof nothing else. Besides, on the ground they have another statue called Natigai, the god of earthly things, with his wife and children, whom likewise they worship with incense, striking or gnashing the teeth, and lifting up their hands, and desire thereof temperature of the air, fruits of the earth, children, and the like. They hold the soul to be immortal, and when a man dies, it enters into another body, better or worse, according to the merits of the former life; as of a poor man to become a gentleman, and after a prince or lord, and so higher till it be absorbed in God; and if it have ill deserved, to be a poorer man, after a dog, always descending to the lowest rank of baseness. They have a comely speech, salute cheerfully and honestly, have a graceful carriage, and feed cleanly. They bear great reverence to their parents, and if any be undutiful or regardless of their necessity, there is a public tribunal assigned for this particular to punish ungrateful or disobedient children: prisoners are released at three years' end, and marked in the cheek, that they may be known for malefactors.

The barons and people which go to the Grand Khan observe these rights; first within half a mile of the place where the Khan is, all is still and quiet without noise or any loud speech; that every baron carries continually a little vessel to spit in, after which he covers it, none daring to spit in the hall; they have fur buskins of white leather, which they put on when they enter the hall, putting off the former, and giving them to the servants, lest they should foul the carpets.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A COPIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE COUNTRIES BETWEEN
THE PLACE OF HIS RESIDENCE AND THE
COUNTRY OF THIBET.

TEN miles off Cambalu is a certain great river named Pulisangan, emptying itself into the ocean, by which many ships with much merchandise ascend; and in that place there is a very fair bridge, all of serpentine stone, curiously wrought, containing three hundred paces in length, and eight in breadth, so broad that ten men may ride abreast; on each side it is secured with a wall of marble, and pillars set in a row, and in the height of this ascent is a great and high pillar, at the feet whereof is a great lion, and on the top another, and so quite through the bridge: one pace and a half distance are pillars with lions on the tops, and a fair wall with wrought marble work betwixt, to keep men from falling. Having passed over the river and bridge, and proceeding thirty miles westward (in which palaces are continually seen, with vineyards and fertile fields), you come to the city Gouza, both fair and great, having many monasteries of idols. Cloths of gold and silk are made there, and the purest and finest cambrics or lawns; and many common inns for strangers or travellers are found in that city. The citizens are artificers and merchants. A mile without this city the way parteth, one leading west, the other south-east; that to the west leadeth through the province of Cathay, but the other, towards the country of Mangi, from the city of Gouza to the kingdom of Tainfu.

You ride ten days through Cathay, always finding many fair cities, well furnished with vineyards and tilled fields, from whence wine is carried to Cathay, where there is none; there are many mulberry-trees for silkworms, the people civil, and cities very numerous and populous. Tainfu is the name of the kingdom, and of the chief city, which is great and fair, hath much trade, with store of ammunition, fit for the Khan's armies. The wine about this city serveth the whole province. Seven days further westward is a pleasant country beautified with many castles and cities, in which also there is great trade in different merchandise carried on. After which you come to a city very great, named Pianfu, in which there is vast abundance of silk and much trade. Westward from Pianfu stands a very pleasant castle, named Thaigin, anciently built by a king called Dor; in it is a spacious palace, wherein is a fine hall, in which are painted all the famous kings which have reigned there, and it is a wondrous spectacle. Of this king Dor, they say he was potent, and was attended only by young damsels, of which he had many in his court. These also, when he had a mind to take his pleasure, carried him in a small light chariot through the castle, which was so fortified by art and nature, that the governor thereof feared none, no, not Umcan his lord, against whom he rebelled.

But seven men, professing fidelity and service to Dor, took him at a disadvantage in hunting, and brought him prisoner to Presbyter John, or Umcan, who put him on vile cloths, and appointed him to keep his cattle, and set over him a strong guard, till two

years were ended: after which he commanded him to be brought before him, and being dressed in princely apparel, he giving him his pardon, after a sharp admonition, sent him well attended to the re-possession of his kingdom. About twenty miles beyond the castle Thaigin is the river Caramaran, which, by reason of the exceeding breadth and depth thereof, hath no bridge over it in all the space from thence till it floweth to the ocean. On the shore thereof are many cities and castles built, wherein great trade is carried on. This country abounds with ginger, silk, and fowl, especially pheasants, so that three of them are bought for a Venetian groat. There grow reeds in vast plenty, so thick that some are a foot, and others a foot and a half in compass, which are applied to many uses. Passing this river, after two days' journey, is the famous city called Carianfu, where many cloths of gold and silk are made. Here grow ginger, galingle spike, and many spices. The people are idolaters.

Proceeding seven days' journey westward, many cities and towns, lovely fields and gardens, are found, and everywhere mulberries for silkworms. As for the people, they are mostly idolaters; but there are also Christians, Turks, Nestorians, and some Saracens. There is a vast abundance here of wild beasts and fowl. If you proceed seven days' journey farther, you shall come to a certain great city named Quensanfu, which is the chief city of the kingdom, in which have reigned many famous kings; and at this day the son of the Great Khan, called Mangalu, hath the command thereof. That country yields great plenty of silk,

cloth of gold, and all other things necessary for furnishing an army, and for the preservation of man's life. The inhabitants worship idols, and there are some Christians, Turks, and Saracens. Five miles without this city standeth the palace of Mangalu, seated in a plain, where are many springs, rivulets, and places of game. There is a high wall encompassing a park of five miles, where are all sorts of wild beasts and fowls. In the midst is an excellent palace, having many halls and chambers, great and fair, all painted with gold and azure, and numberless statues adorning it. The king, with his courtiers, delights himself in hunting the wild beasts, and taking of fowl, and following his father's examples in justice and equity, is much beloved of his people.

Proceeding three days' journey westward from the said palace, through a very beautiful plain, where many cities and castles are, which abound with silk merchandise and manufactures, you come to a country where in the mountains and valleys are frequent habitations, and many villages of the province of Chunchian. The inhabitants as to religion are idolaters; and as to employment, husbandmen. Also in that country they hunt lions, bears, stags, roebucks, deer, and wolves. This plain is two days' journey over, and the country is about twenty days' journey westward, well inhabited, being finely diversified into mountains, valleys, and woods. After these twenty days towards the west, there lies a province called Achbaluch Mangi, that is, the white city, on the borders of Mangi, which is well peopled. This province, for two days' journey, hath a

plain, in which are an infinite number of villages : beyond these lie mountains, valleys, and wood, all well inhabited. It hath plenty of wild beasts, and of those creatures that yield musk. In this province ginger grows in great plenty, as also corn and rice.

After twenty days' journey through those hills is a plain, and a province in the confines of Mangi, named Sindinfu. The chief city hath the same name, and is very great, and exceeding rich, being twenty miles in circuit. It hath had many rich and mighty kings ; but an old king dying, left three sons successors in the kingdom, who divided the city into three parts, compassing every part with their proper walls ; all which, notwithstanding, were contained within the former wall ; but the Great Khan subjected nevertheless that city and kingdom. Through this city run many rivers, and many places round about, some half a mile over, some two hundred paces, very deep ; on them are many bridges of stone, very fair, eight paces broad, set on both sides with marble pillars, which bear up a timber frame that covers the bridge, each bridge having streets and shops thereupon. When the rivers have passed through the city they become one great river, called Quian, which runs one hundred days' journey hence to the ocean. Near these rivers are many cities and castles, and on them innumerable ships for merchandise. Proceeding four days' journey farther, through a very fine plain, many cities, castles, and villages are found, in which five lawns extend in beautiful order. There are also many wild beasts there. Beyond the plain, which we have now mentioned, is the wide pro-

vince of Thibet, which the Great Khan vanquished and wasted; for in it lie many cities destroyed and castles overthrown, by the space of twenty days' journey; and because it is become a wilderness, wanting inhabitants, wild beasts and lions are increased excessively, and it is requisite therefore that travellers carry victuals with them. Very large cane grows in this country, ten paces in length, and three palms in thickness, and as much from knot to knot. When travellers therefore will rest at night secure from beasts, they take great bundles of the greener reeds, and putting fire under, kindle them, which makes such a crackling, and so great a noise, that it may be heard two miles off; which terrible sound the wild beasts hearing, flee away; but it has sometimes happened that horses and other beasts, which merchants use for their journey, hearing this noise and cracking, have grown also much afraid, and betaking themselves to flight have escaped from their masters; and therefore wiser travellers binding their feet together detain them in their proper places.

CHAPTER XIX.

A LARGE DESCRIPTION OF THE LAST-MENTIONED PROVINCE, AND OF MANY OTHERS, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE AUTHOR IN HIS PROGRESS THROUGH THEM.

THESE twenty days' journey ended, having passed over the province of Thibet, we met with cities and many

villages, in which, through the blindness of idolatry, a wicked custom is used; for no man there marrieth a wife that is a virgin; whereupon, when travellers and strangers, coming from other places, pass through this country and pitch their pavilions, the women of that place having marriageable daughters bring them unto strangers, desiring them to take them as wives as long as they remain there. Thus the handsomest are chosen, and the rest return home sorrowful, and when they depart they are not suffered to carry any away with them, but faithfully restore them to their parents. The maiden also requireth some toy or small present of him who hath taken her, which she may show, as an argument and proof of her condition; and she that hath many such favours and toys to show to her wooers is accounted more noble, and may on that account be advantageously married, and when she would appear most honourably dressed, she hangs all her lovers' favours about her neck, and the more acceptable she was to many, so much the more honour she receives from her countrymen. But when they are once married they are no more suffered to converse with strange men, and the men of this country are very cautious never to offend one another in this matter. They are idolaters, and cruel, thinking it no sin if they rob and exercise theft. They live by hunting and the fruits of the earth: many beasts also are found with them, yielding musk, called in this country Gadderi. They have a language of their own, and have no money, not so much as the paper money of the Khan, but use corals for money, and are clothed with

the skins of beasts, or coarse hemp. This country belongs to the province of Thibet, for Thibet is a very large province, and has been sometimes divided into eight kingdoms having many cities and towns, with mountains, lakes, and rivers, where gold is found. The women wear coral about their necks, and hang it about the necks of their idols as a precious thing. In this country there are very large dogs, as big as asses, which take wild beasts, especially wild oxen, called Boyamini.

There are in this province many sorts of spices, which are never brought into these parts. This Thibet is (as all the former provinces) subject to the Khan. On the west of the province of Thibet bordereth the province of Caidu, which was formerly governed by her own king, now by the governors of the Khan. By the west, you must not understand that the countries are in the west; but that we, departing from those parts which are betwixt the east and north-east, came hither westward, and therefore reckon them westward. The people are idolaters, have many cities, the chief called by the name of the province, Caidu, built on the frontiers of the province. There is a large salt lake, in which are abundance of pearls, white, but not round, so many, that in point of price they would become little worth if they were suffered to be carried away at men's pleasure. It is therefore provided, upon pain of death, that none should presume to fish for pearl in this lake without the licence of the Great Khan. There is also a mountain, in which is found a mine of turquoise stones, the digging of which is restrained by the like licence. Many Gadderi are also

in this province, which yield musk. That lake also which breeds pearl in such plenty abounds with fish, and the whole country is full of wild beasts, that is to say, of lions, bears, stags, deer, ounces, roebucks, and divers kinds of birds. Cloves are found there in great plenty, which are gathered from small trees, which have boughs and leaves like the bay-tree, but somewhat longer and straighter, white flowers, and brittle, as are the cloves, and when they are ripe they are black and dusky. Ginger, cinnamon, and several other spices, grow there in great plenty, which are not brought into our countries. Wine, however, though plentiful with us, groweth not in it, but instead thereof they make a most excellent drink of corn, rice, and divers spices.

The inhabitants of this country worship idols, to which they are so besotted, that they think they deserve their favours if they prostitute their wives, sisters, and daughters, to be abused by travellers; for, when any stranger cometh amongst them, every master of a house seeketh to give him entertainment, and leaving the females and house to the strangers, will not return until they depart, which he doth for the glory of his idols, hoping they will be more gracious to him. Certain sprigs of gold are their money, using weights, and according to the weight of the sprig is the value of the money, and this money is their larger sort of money without stamp. They have also a lesser, which they make after this manner. They boil salt in a cauldron for about an hour, and of this, being congealed, they make little lumps like twopenny loaves, which,

being solid, is signed with the prince's stamp, and they make vast profit thereof in places remote from cities which have store of musk and gold, and want chapmen. These barter their gold for salt, to use with their meats.

Leaving this province, they proceed fifteen days' journey further, and in that space meet with castles, and many villages whose inhabitants have the same customs that the province of Caidu hath, and at length they come unto a river called Brius, by which the province of Caidu is bounded. In this river gold is found in great plenty, which they call Di Paiola, washed in vessels to cleanse it from the sand and earth. On the banks thereof cinnamon grows in great abundance. This river falls directly into the ocean. Having passed over the river Brius, they come westward to the province Caraiian, which contains seven kingdoms. It is subject to the Great Khan, whose son, named Sentemur, is made vice-king of that kingdom, and is a young prince, rich, wise, and just.

The inhabitants thereof are idolaters; you ride five days' journey through it, and find it all well peopled: they live on their beasts and fruits. The country breeds excellent horses, and it hath a peculiar and difficult language. Having finished these five days' journey, you come to the chief city called Jaci, which is both great and famous, hath in it many merchants and artificers, and many sorts of people, idolaters, Christians, Nestorians, and Saracens, but the greatest part of the inhabitants are idolaters. It hath corn and rice, notwithstanding which they eat no bread of corn, because it is not wholesome, but they

make bread of rice; they make drink also of it, and several spices, which is very pleasant; they use white porcelain instead of money, and for ornaments, shells which are found at sea. Much salt is made in this city of the water of salt-wells, from whence the vice-king hath great profit. The men of this country care not if any man come to their wives, so they give their consent. There is also a lake there very full of fish, containing a hundred miles in compass. These men eat raw flesh of hens, beef, mutton, and buffaloes, but prepared after this manner: they first cut it into small pieces, and after season it with excellent spices; but the poorer sort shred it, and lay it in garlic sauce, and eat it as we do boiled meat. Departing from the city of Jaci, having travelled ten days' journey westward, we came to the province called, as the chief city, Carazan, which Cogatin, son of Cublai, governeth. The rivers there yield great quantities of washed gold, and also that which is solid, and on the mountains they find gold in the vein, and they give one pound of gold for six of silver. They spend porcelain for money brought thither from India.

The inhabitants are idolaters; very great serpents are bred in this country, some of which are ten paces in length, and in thickness ten spans. They have two little feet before near the head, with three talons or claws like lions, and the eyes bigger than a loaf, shining very bright. They have their mouths and jaws so very wide, that they are able to swallow a man, great and sharp teeth; nor is there any man, or other living creature, which can behold these serpents without

terror. There are also some less, of eight, or six, some of five paces long, which are taken after this manner. In the daytime they use to lie hid, by reason of the heat, in holes, out of which they go by night to seek their prey, and devour whatsoever they get, lions, wolves, as well as other beasts, and then go to seek water, leaving such a track through their weight in the sands, as if a piece of timber had been drawn there: whereupon the hunters fasten under the sands great iron spikes, in their usual tracks, whereby they are wounded and slain. The crows presently proclaim the serpent's fate, and by their cries invite the hunters, who come and flay him, taking out his gall, which is used for divers medicines, amongst other things, for the biting of mad dogs, a pennyweight given in wine; and for women in travail, for carbuncles, and other distempers, and they sell the flesh dear, as being exceeding delicate.

There are stout horses bred in this province, which by their merchants are carried into India. They commonly take one bone out of the tail, lest he should bend his tail hither and thither, and esteem it more comely, that it hang downright. They use long stirrups as the French, which the Tartars and other nations, for their shooting, use short, because when they shoot they rise up. They use targets and armour in the wars, made of the hides of buffaloes; they have lancets and cross-bows, and poison all their arrows. Some of them, who are villains, are said to carry poison about them continually, that if they be taken they may suddenly swallow it, and so dying at once prevent torture; for which cause the great

lords have dog's dung ready, which they force them to swallow, and that makes them vomit the poison. Before the Great Khan subjected them, they used, when any stranger which seemed of good presence and parts lodged with them, to kill him by night, supposing that those good parts of that man would abide afterwards in that house; and this silly notion has proved the death of many.

Travelling forwards from the province of Carazan, after five days' journey westward, is the province of Cardandan, which also is subject to the Great Khan: the chief city thereof is called Vociam, the inhabitants whereof use porcelain, and weighed pieces of gold instead of money; for in that country, and many others lying round about, silver mines are not found, and they give an ounce of gold for five ounces of silver, and according to this exchange great gain is made. The men and women in that country cover their teeth with thin plates of gold, which they so fit to themselves, that the teeth themselves seem, as they were, set in those plates. The men about their arms and legs make lists, pricking the places with needles, and putting therein a black indelible tincture; and these lists or marks are esteemed with them as a mark of great gallantry. They give their minds to nothing but riding, hunting, hawking, and the exercise of arms, leaving the household cares to the women, who are assisted therein by slaves, which they buy, or take in war. When a woman is once delivered, she forsakes the bed, washes the child, and dresses it, and then the husband lieth down, and keeps the child with him forty

days, not suffering it to depart; is visited all that time by friends and neighbours, to cheer and comfort him. The woman looks to the house, and carries the husband his broths to the bed, and gives suck to the child by him. Their wine is made of rice and spice; their ordinary food is rice, and raw flesh, dressed as before mentioned. In this province there are no other idols, save that every family adoreth the oldest man in the house, of whom they say, come themselves and all they have; they dwell for the most part in wild and mountainous places, but foreigners come not to those mountains, because the air would kill them, being in summer very corrupt.

They have no letters, but make their contracts and obligations by tallies of wood, one half whereof one keepeth, and the other the other, which being afterwards paid, the tally is destroyed. There are no physicians in this province, nor in Caidu, Vociam, and Caraiian; but when any is sick, they call the magicians or idol priests together, and the sick person declares his disease unto them; then the magicians dance, and sound certain instruments, and bellow forth songs in honour of their gods, till at length the devil entereth into one of them, skipping and playing in the dance. Then leaving the dance, they consult with him that is possessed, for what cause this disease happened unto him, and what is to be done for his recovery. The devil answereth by him, because he hath done this or that, or because he hath offended this or that god, therefore he fell into this disease. Then the magicians intreat that god to pardon him this offence, promising that if the sick person recovers, he shall offer a

sacrifice of his own blood ; but if the devil, or the priest, think the patient to be sick of such a disease that he cannot be freed from the same, he useth to answer : this man hath so grievously offended that god that he cannot by any sacrifices be appeased ; but if he think he shall recover, he commandeth to offer so many rams, having black heads, and to prepare so many magicians with their wives, by them to offer sacrifices, and that god may then be appeased towards him ; which being heard, his kinsmen quickly cause those things to be done which the devil commanded. They kill rams, and sprinkle their blood in the air, and the magicians assembled light great candles, and perfume the whole house with incense, making great smoke of lignum aloes, and sprinkle the broth of the flesh in the air, with the potion made of spices ; all which being duly performed, they skip about again, and dance in honour of that idol, which is supposed to have been favourable to the sick, singing and making a horrible noise with their voices. These things being performed, they ask the possessed again whether the idol be pleased ? And if he answer no, they presently prepare themselves to fulfil any other command of his ; but if he answer that he is satisfied, they sit down at the table, and eat the flesh offered to the idol with great joy, and drink the liquors ; and dinner being ended, and the magicians paid, every one returns to his own home ; and when the sick hath thus escaped the disease, through the providence of God, and hath been restored to health, they attribute it to the idol, to whom they sacrificed ; but if he die, then they say the idol was

defrauded, and that some of the sacrificers tasted thereof first: this is not done to all, but by the richer, the devil, or his priests in his name, imposing on their blindness.

The Great Khan, A.D. 1272, sent an army into the kingdom of Vociam and Gurazan to reduce it, his forces being to the number of twelve thousand veteran troops, under the conduct of a Nestorian, an experienced officer. As soon as the King of Mein and King of Bengala heard of their coming, assembling their forces, they joined horse and foot together about three score thousand, and about a thousand elephants bearing castles, and in every castle twelve or sixteen armed men were placed; with this army the King of Mein marched speedily towards the city of Vociam, where the army of the Tartars lay encamped. Nestardin, however, marched forth with invincible courage to fight the enemy, and drawing near them, encamped near a certain great wood, knowing that the elephants with their towers on their backs were not able to enter the wood. Then the King of Mein seeing this, resolved to meet them; but the Tartarian horse, perceiving the elephants which were placed in the front of the battle, were terrified, so that they could not by any means be brought to charge the elephants; the Tartars therefore were compelled to alight from their horses, and tying them to the trees, they came to fight on foot against those beasts, and very wisely shot a multitude of arrows against the elephants, which, not able to endure the wounds received by the arrows, betook themselves to flight, and went all to the next wood, broke their

castles, and overthrew the armed men sitting in them : which the Tartars seeing run to their horses, and getting upon them, furiously fell upon the king's army with great violence, and many of either army fell. At length the King of Mein being put to flight, left the victory to the Tartars, who hastened to the wood, and taking many captives, used their help to seize two hundred of these elephants, and ever since the Great Khan hath used elephants in his army, to which before he was not accustomed : hereupon also he vanquished the countries of the King of Mein and Bengala, and subjected them to his empire.

Departing from the province of Caraim, there is a great desert, which continueth two days and a half, nor is there any habitation there, but a very large plain, in which three days in the week multitudes meet together for trading. Many descend from the great mountains of that country, bringing gold with them to change for silver, that is, giving an ounce of gold for five ounces of silver, and therefore many merchants from foreign nations come thither, who bring silver and carry gold away, and bring thither merchandise to sell to these people ; for to those high mountains in which they who gather gold in the country dwell no stranger can come, because the way is intricate and unpassable. When you are past that plain, going toward the south, Mein bordereth upon India, and the distance is about fifteen days' journey through places uninhabited and woody, in which innumerable elephants, unicorns, and other wild beasts wander.

After that fifteen days' journey you come to Mein, a

great and noble city, the head of the kingdom, and subject to the Great Khan. The inhabitants thereof have a peculiar language, and are idolaters. In this city there was a king, who, being ready to die, commanded that near to his sepulchre there should be erected two towers in the form of pyramids, one at the head, the other at the feet, both of marble, of the height of ten fathom. On the top was placed a round ball; he caused one to be covered all over with gold, a finger thick, and the other with silver; and upon the top, round about the balls, many little gold and silver bells were hanged, which, at the blowing of the wind, gave a certain shrill and pleasant sound. The monument or sepulchre was also covered with plates, partly of gold partly of silver. He commanded this to be made in honour of his soul, and that his memory should never die among men. And when the Great Khan undertook to subdue this city, he sent a valiant captain, and the greatest part of his army were cavalry, of which the better part of his troops consists; these winning the city would not demolish that monument without the Khan's knowledge; who hearing that the deceased had erected it for the honour of his soul, would not suffer it to be injured; for the manner of the Tartars is not to violate the things which belong to the dead. In this province are many elephants, wild oxen, great and fair stags, and deer, and other wild beasts of divers kinds.

The province Bengala bordereth upon India towards the south, which the Great Khan subdued when Marco Polo lived in this country. This country has its own

proper king and language, the inhabitants whereof are all idolaters ; they have masters which keep schools, and teach idolatries and enchantments, a thing common to all the great men of that country. They eat flesh, rice, and milk ; they have cotton in great plenty, and by the manufacture thereof much trade is there carried on. They abound also with spike, galingal, ginger, sugar, and divers other spices ; huge oxen also are there, comparable unto elephants in height, but not in bulk. Many eunuchs are made in this province, which are afterwards sold to merchants. This province continueth thirty days' journey, in the end whereof, going eastward, is the province of Cangigu, which is a country having also its proper king and peculiar language, the inhabitants whereof worship idols, and are tributary to the Great Khan ; their king hath about three hundred wives ; much gold is found in this province and many spices, but they cannot easily be transported, because that country is far distant from the sea : there are also many elephants in it, and much game. The inhabitants live on milk, flesh, and rice ; they have no wine, but they make very good drink of rice and spices. As well the men as the women used to embroider their faces, necks, hands, bellies, and legs, making the images of lions, dragons, and birds, and so firmly imprint them, that they cannot easily be put out ; and the more such images any one has upon his body, so much he is esteemed the finer and the more gallant. And there are also in this country professors of this foolish art of flesh-embroidery, which use no other trade but this needlework and dyeing of fools' skins.

Amu lies to the east of that province, and is subject to the Great Khan, whose inhabitants worship idols, and have to themselves a peculiar language. They abound with herds of cattle, and have plenty of victuals, and many horses, and these excellent, which merchants carry for sale to India. They have also many buffaloes and oxen, because there are delicate pastures there. As well men as women wear bracelets of gold and silver of great value on their arms, as also the like on their legs; but those of the women are most valuable: from Amu to Cangigu are above five-and-twenty days' journey. The province of Tholoman is still eight days' journey farther distant to the east from Amu, subject to the Great Khan, having a peculiar language, and worshipping idols. The men and women in this country are tall, well-shaped, and of a brown complexion. The country is very well inhabited, having many and strong castles and cities. The men are practised in arms, and accustomed to war; they burn the bodies of their dead, and enclosing the relics of their bones in a chest, hide them in the caves of the mountains, that they cannot be touched either by man or beast. Gold is found in great plenty there, and instead of money, they use porcelain brought from India, as also in Cangigu and Amu. From the province of Tholoman the high road leads towards the east by a river, on the bank of which are many cities and castles, and at the end of twelve days you come to the great city Cintiqui. The country is subject to the Great Khan, and the inhabitants therefore addicted to idolatry. Excellent cloths are made in this country of

the bark of trees, with which they are clothed in the summer. Many lions are there, so that for fear of them, none dare sleep without doors by night; the vessels which sail up and down the river for fear of these lions are not fastened to the bank. There are great dogs in the same country so hardy and strong, that they fear not to attack the lion; and it often happeneth that two dogs and one archer kill a lion; for the dogs, set on by the man, give the onset, and the lion's nature is presently to take shelter from some tree, that the dogs may not come behind him, neither will his great heart suffer him to run from the dogs, lest he should seem afraid; but he holds his stately pace, the man meanwhile shooting, and the dogs fastening on his hinder parts, but with such agility, that when the lion turns on them they are gone; and then this magnanimous beast holds on his way again, to seek a tree for succour, till what with bitings and arrows he sometimes comes short, and with the expense of blood, dieth by the way. This country abounds with silk, which by merchants is carried to diverse provinces by the river; they live therefore chiefly by their merchandise: their money is paper, and they are valiant in arms.

At the end of ten days is the city of Sidinfu, and twenty days from thence is Gingui, and four days thence is Palanfu, towards the south, and is in Cathay, returning by the other side of the province. The people are idolaters, and burn their dead; there are also certain Christians which have a church, are all under the Khan, and use paper money. They make cloths of gold and silk and lawns very fine. By this

city, which has many cities under it, runs a great river, which carries store of merchandise to Cambalu, made by many channels to pass thither; but we will leave this place, and, proceeding three days' journey, speak of Ciangu, a great city towards the south, of the province of Cathay, subject to the Khan. The inhabitants are idolaters, and burn their dead. Their money is the (mulberry) paper coin of the Khan. In this city, and the territories that depend upon it, they make large quantities of salt, for the earth abounds therewith, and out of it they get salt after this manner: they heap up the earth in the manner of a hill, and pour water upon it, which draws the saltiness of the earth into it, and then runs into certain conduits, and is bciled in pans, till it be congealed to salt, fair and white, to the great gain of the people and of the Great Khan, being carried into other countries to sell. There are large peaches, high flavoured, and weigh two pounds apiece. Five days' journey beyond the city Ciangu, in Cathay, southward, standeth another city, named Ciangli, in which road are many cities and castles, subject to the Khan, through the midst of which runs a great river, very convenient for shipping laden with merchandise.

Six days' journey hence to the south is the noble kingdom and great city of Tudinfu, which had formerly its proper king, before it was subdued by the Great Khan, A.D. 1272, and hath eleven royal cities famous for traffic under the jurisdiction thereof. It is very pleasantly seated for gardens and fruits, rich in silks; their Khan sent to be governor thereof one of his barons

named Lucanser, with eight thousand horse, who rebelled again this lord, but was reduced and slain by an army of one hundred thousand horse, under two other barons sent against him, and the country reduced to obedience. Seven days off towards the south is the famous city named Singuimatu, to which on the south a great river runs, which being divided by the inhabitants of the place into two rivers, flows one branch to the east towards Cathay, and the other to the west towards Mangi; by these rivers innumerable vessels, and incredible for their size and wealth, bring necessities to both provinces. If you proceed sixteen days' journey towards the south from Singuimatu, you will meet with cities and towns where prodigious trading is exercised. The inhabitants of these countries are idolaters, subject to the Great Khan. After that, sixteen days, you come unto a great river named Caramoran, which is said to take its rise in the kingdom of Umean, or Presbyter John, in the north. It is very deep, and carries ships of great burthen; it is also well stocked with fish, within one day's journey of the sea. There are in this river fifteen thousand sail, each of which carries fifteen horses and twenty men, besides victuals and mariners. This is the Khan's fleet, kept there in readiness to carry an army to any of the islands if they should rebel, or to any remote region. Near the bank of the river where these ships are kept is Coiganzu, and over against it Quanzu, one a great city, the other a small one. After you are past that river, you enter into the noble kingdom of Mangi; but you must not think that we have handled

in order the whole province of Cathay, having not spoken of the twentieth part; for Marco Polo, passing by the said province, hath only described the cities in his way, leaving those on both hands, and those betwixt these, to prevent tediousness, and to avoid writing from hearsay.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE PROVINCE OF MANGI, AND OF THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS REDUCED UNDER THE POWER OF THE TARTARS, TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROVINCES AND CITIES AFTERWARDS REDUCED UNDER THEIR DOMINION.

THE province of Mangi is the richest and most famous that is founded in the east; and in A.D. 1269 was governed by a certain king called Fanfur, who was richer and mightier than any which had reigned there in a hundred years, but a man peaceable and charitable, so beloved of his subjects, that thereby, and by the strength of the country, he seemed invincible. It was from a persuasion of this that the king, as well as the people, lost the use and exercise of war and arms. All the city was encompassed with ditches full of water. He held in pay no horses, because he feared nobody; and, in process of time, the king, betaking himself to pleasure more than was fit, employed his whole time in delights. He maintained about a thousand concubines, with whom he passed his time in pleasure. He maintained justice, and preserved peace; no man durst offend his neighbour and disturb the peace for fear of severe and impartial punishment; sc

that artificers would often leave their shops full of wares open by night, and yet none would presume to go into them. Travellers and strangers safely walked day and night through that whole kingdom, fearing no man. The king himself was also merciful towards the poor, and did not overlook them that were oppressed with necessity, or punished with penury. Besides, every year he took up twenty thousand young infants, cast off by their mothers, who, through poverty, were not able to keep them, which he brought up, and put them, when they were grown up, to some trade, marrying the young men with the maids, which he had in like manner so educated.

Cublai-Khan was of a different disposition from Fanfur, and delighted only in wars and conquests; and to make himself great, he levied an army of horse and foot, and made one, named Chinsan-Baian, *i.e.*, a hundred eyes, general thereof, he therefore coming with his army and a fleet to the province of Mangi, first summoned the city Coiganzu to yield obedience to his Emperor, who refused the same; he departed without any assault given to the city, and required the same of the second city, which likewise refusing, he marched forwards to the third and fourth, and received the like answer of them all; but he assaulted the next with great courage, and vanquished the same by force, and slew every creature of what sex or age soever therein, which so frightened and terrified the rest, that they all presently yielded. The Great Khan sent out another great army after the former, with both which armies he marched against the chief city Quinsai,

where the King of Mangi resided, who, being mightily terrified as never having seen any war, fled with his wealth on board the ships he had prepared to certain impregnable islands in the ocean, where he afterwards died, committing the custody of the city of Quinsai to his wife, bidding her to defend it as well as she could, for, being a woman, she needed not fear death if she was taken.

It is to be observed, that King Fanfur had been told by his diviners, that his kingdom would never be taken from him but by one who had a hundred eyes, which the queen knew, and therefore was still in hopes not to lose the city, however straightened, thinking it impossible for one man to have a hundred eyes; but one day she heard the commander of the Tartars was called Baian Chinsan, that is to say, a hundred eyes, and was much terrified; wherefore, calling for the commander of the Tartar army, thinking him to be the man which the astrologers spoke of, she delivered the city unto him, which being heard, the citizens and inhabitants of the whole province yielded to the obedience of the Great Khan. The queen was sent unto the court of the Great Khan, and was most honourably received by him, and maintained like a queen. And now we will speak of the cities in the country of Mangi. Coiganzu is a very fair and rich city situate towards the south-east and east, in the entrance of the province of Mangi, where are always great numbers of ships, being seated on the river Carama, and a great quantity of merchandise is carried thither; salt is also made there in abundance. Proceeding from Coiganzu,

you ride towards the south-east one day's journey on a stone causeway, on both sides whereof are great fences, with deep waters, through which they may pass with proper vessels; neither is there any entrance into Mangi but by shipping, excepting this causeway.

At the end of that day's journey is a city called Paughin, large and fair; the people make stuffs of gold and silk, are merchants, and idolaters. The paper money of the Great Khan is received throughout the whole country. It is plentiful in all necessaries of life. To the city Caim is from Paughin one day's journey south-east; and this is also a famous city. The country thereabouts abounding with fish, beasts, and fowl, especially pheasants, are found in exceeding great plenty, as large as peacocks, of which you may have three for a Venetian groat. Proceeding farther from hence one day's journey, you come through a well manured, most fruitful, and well peopled country to the city of Tingui, which though it be not over large, yet hath in it exceeding great plenty of victuals. They are merchants, and have a vast resort of ships: there is plenty of beasts and fowl. It is seated to the south-east, and on the left hand towards the east, three days' journey off the ocean, and in the country between, are very many salt-pits, and they make great quantities of salt. After this is Cingui, a great city, whence the country is furnished with salt, whereof the Khan makes immense profit, almost beyond belief: they are idolaters, and have paper money. From Cingui, riding towards the south-east you meet with the noble city Janguì, under the government whereof are other cities,

seven-and-twenty in number; and in that city resides one of the twelve barons, which are governors of provinces, chosen by that Great Khan; they are idolaters, and live on merchandise. They make arms and harness for war, and Master Marco had the sole government thereof, by commission from the Great Khan, three years together, instead of one of these barons. Naughin is a province to the west, one of the greatest and noblest of Mangi; a place of great merchandise; they are idolaters, have none but paper money, have vast quantities of beasts and fowl, wild and tame. They make cloths of gold and silver, and are rich merchants, and the country is very advantageous to the Khan, especially by custom of merchandise; there is likewise great plenty of corn.

Sainfu is a noble and great city in the province of Mangi, and hath twelve rich and great cities under her jurisdiction. They make great quantities of silks and cloths of gold; have plenty of game, fowl, and all things pertaining to a city of note; so strong that it was three years besieged, and could not be vanquished by the army of the Tartars, when the province of Mangi was subdued, for it is encompassed on every side with lakes, that there was no way to it but on the north; so that ships came and went continually bringing plenty of victuals, which not a little afflicted the Great Khan. The two brethren, Master Nicolo and Master Maffio, then in his court, hearing thereof, went to him, and offered him their service to devise certain engines, after the manner of the west, able to shoot a stone of three hundred weight, thereby to kill men and ruin

houses. The Khan appointed carpenters, which were Nestorian Christians, who made three of these engines in a short space, which were proved before him, and by ships sent to his army. Planting them therefore against the city Sianfu, they began to cast great stones into the city; and the first falling upon a certain house broke the most part of it with the violence thereof, which the besieged inhabitants seeing, were very much astonished, and yielded themselves, and became subject to the Great Khan, on the same conditions with the rest of Mangi, to the great repute of the two Venetian brethren, the one the author's father, and the other his uncle.

From the city of Sianfu to a certain city called Singui are accounted fifteen miles south-eastward, which, although it is not very large, yet has a prodigious number of ships, being seated upon the greatest river in the world, called Quian, the breadth of which in some places is ten miles, in others eight, and in many six; but the length thereof extendeth above a hundred days' journey from the source of it into the sea. Innumerable other rivers flow into it, which run through divers regions, and are navigable; and these make it so great, that incredible quantities of merchandise are brought by this river. There are also many other cities, in number about two hundred, which participate of the advantages of this river, for it runs through the bounds of sixteen provinces. The greatest commodity is salt, wherewith all the cities which communicate by these waters are supplied. Master Marco saw at one time at Singui five thousand vessels, and yet other cities on the river have more; all these

ships are covered, and have but one mast and one sail, and usually carry four thousand, and so upwards, some of them twelve thousand Venetia Cantari; neither do they use cordage of hemp, except for the mast and sail, but have canes, fifteen paces long, which they split into thin parts from one end to the other, and binding the cut parts together, and wreathing them, make very long ropes, so that some of them contain three hundred fathom in length; and those ropes are as strong as hemp, and serve for halses and cables, to draw their ships up and down the river, each vessel having ten or twelve horses for that purpose.

On that river, in many places, are rocky hillocks, on which are built monasteries to their idols, and all the way are valleys and places inhabited. Cayngi is a little city upon the same river south-eastward, where every year is brought plenty of corn and rice, carried for the most part to Cambalu; for they pass thither by lakes and rivers, and by one large canal, which the Khan caused to be made for a passage from one river to another, and from Mangi to Cambalu, without going to sea; which work is beautiful and wonderful for the sight and length, and more for the profit which accrues thereby to the cities. He hath made also great causeways to go on land by these waters commodiously. In the midst of the said river is an island, or rock, on which is erected a great temple and monastery, in which are two hundred idolatrous monks. Cinghianfu is a city of Mangi, rich in merchandise, plentiful of game, having all kind of wild beasts and fowl, and of victual. In it are two churches of Nestorian Christians,

built A.D. 1274, when the Great Khan sent a governor thither, Marsachis, a Nestorian who built them. From the city Cinghianfu, in three days' journey south-eastward, you find many cities and castles, all idolaters, and at last come to Tinguigui, a great and fair city, abounding with all kind of provisions.

When Baian Chinsan, general of the army of the Tartars, conquered the province of Mangi, he sent many Christians called Alani against the city, which was double walled; into the inner they retired, into the other the Alans entered, and found there abundance of wine, whereof, after a bad journey, they began to drink so largely that they were all drunk, and the citizens, in their sleep, suddenly falling upon them, slew them all, not one escaping; but Baian, hearing this, sent another great army against those citizens, which in a short space of time vanquishing the city, in revenge, put them all to the sword, leaving none alive. The great and excellent city Singui contains in circuit twenty miles; multitudes of people are in it, it hath many rich merchants and industrious artificers, and it hath also very many physicians and magicians and wise men, or philosophers. In the mountains of this city, rhubarb and ginger grow in great plenty. This city hath sixteen cities under the jurisdiction thereof, in each of which much trade is carried on, and many curious arts are exercised—many sorts of silk are made there. The word Singui signifies the City of the Earth; also they have another city which they call Quinsai, that is to say, the City of Heaven. From Singui, at the distance of one day's journey, is Vagiü, where is also abundance

of silk and able artificers, with many other merchants, as there are in general in all the cities in this country.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE NOBLE CITY OF QUINSAL, AND OF THE VAST REVENUES DRAWN FROM THENCE BY THE EMPEROR OF THE TARTARS.

IN a journey of three days, you find cities, castles, and villages well peopled and rich. The people are idolaters, under the dominion of the Great Khan. At the end of these days you come to Quinsal, *i.e.* the City of Heaven, which for the excellency thereof hath that name; for in the world there is not the like, or a place in which are found so many pleasures, that a man would think he were in paradise. In this city our author, Marco Polo, hath often been, and considered the same with great diligence, observing the whole state thereof, setting down the same in his memorials, as here from them shall be declared briefly. This city, by common report, is a hundred miles in circuit. The streets and lanes are very long and very wide; there are market-places exceeding large; on the one side a clear lake of fresh water, on the other a great river, which enters in many places, and carries away all the filth of the city, and so runneth into that lake, thence continuing its course into the ocean. This course of water causeth a good air and commodious passage both by land and by those canals. There may go both carts and barks to carry necessaries; and the report is, that there are twelve thousand bridges great and small,

and those on the chief channels are so high that a ship without her masts may pass under, and at the same time chariots and horses pass over it. On the other side the city is a large canal forty miles long, which encloses it on that side, large and full of water from the river, made by the ancient kings of that province both to receive the overflowing of the water and, besides that, to fortify the city, the earth which was taken out being laid within as a bank or hill encompassing it.

There are ten great market-places, besides others in the great streets, which are square, half a mile in each square; and from the great entrance is a principal street, forty paces wide, running right from one end of the city to the other, with many bridges crossing it, and every four miles is found such a market-place, two miles, as is said, in compass. There is also one large canal, which runs against the said street behind the market-places, on the next bank whereof are erected great storehouses of stone, where the merchants from India and other parts lay up their merchandise, being at hand, and commodious for the market-places. In each of these market-places the people meet three days in a week, to the number of between forty and fifty thousand, who bring thither all things that can be desired for man's life, beasts, game, and fowls, that lake yielding such advantages for bringing them up, that for a Venetian groat you may have two geese, and four ducks for the same. Then follow the butcher-rows of veal, beef, kid, and lamb, which the great and rich men eat; for the poor eat all the offal and unclean meats without respect. There are all sorts of herbs and

fruits continually, and amongst the rest huge pears, weighing ten pounds apiece, white within like paste, and very fragrant. Peaches yellow and white, very delicate. Grapes grow not there, but are brought from other places dried; very good wine also, but it is not esteemed in those parts as with us, that of rice and spices contenting them. Every day from the ocean are brought up the river—which is the space of five-and-twenty miles—great quantities of fish, besides that of the lake, so much that a man would think would never be bought, and yet in a few hours all is gone. All these market-places are encompassed with high houses, and underneath are shops for artificers and all sorts of merchandise, as spice, jewels, pearls, and in some only rice-wine. Many streets answer one to another in the said market-places; in some of them are many cold baths, accommodated with attendants of both sexes, a thing to which from children they use themselves. There are chambers also in the same baths, with hot waters for strangers which are not accustomed to the cold waters; they wash every day, neither do they eat before they have washed.

In other streets are mercenary prostitutes, in such numbers that I dare not report it, and not only near the market-places, where they have their places appointed, but through all the city; they stand pompously adorned with rich perfumes, many servants, and their houses finely furnished. These are very skilful in making sports and dalliances, and contriving pleasures for ravishing men out of themselves. In other streets are the physicians, the astrologers, they which teach to

read and write, and infinite other trades. At each end of every market-place is a palace, where lords and governors are appointed by the king to determine difficulties which happen betwixt merchants and others, as also to look to the guards on the bridges, punishing such as are negligent. Along the principal street on both sides are great palaces with gardens, and near them houses of artificers, and such multitudes of people going to and fro that a man would wonder whence such multitudes could be provided with victuals; and Master Marco learned of an officer of the custom-house in Quinsay that, by a very accurate computation, it appeared the daily expense of pepper in Quinsay was three-and-forty somma, and every somma is two hundred and twenty-three pounds. Hence may be guessed the quantity of victuals, flesh, wine, and spices were there spent. The inhabitants are idolaters, use none but paper money, are of a very fair complexion, apparelled for the most part in silk, which grows in all that territory abundantly, besides that which is brought from other places. There are twelve principal companies or corporations, each of which have one thousand shops, and in each shop or standing are ten, fifteen, or twenty men at work, and in some forty under one master.

The rich tradesmen do not work with their hands, but stand in their shops, well, or rather pompously dressed, especially their wives, with jewels invaluable. And although their old kings ordained that the child should be of the father's trade, yet the rich are permitted not to work at it, but to keep their shop, and

men working in the same trade. Their houses are well built, and very richly furnished with pictures and other ornaments of immense price. The natives are peaceable; know not how to manage arms, nor keep them in their houses; neither is there strife and debate among them. They exercise their trades with great sincerity. They live in such amity, that one street seems as one house, without jealousy among their wives, which they hold in great respect, and it would be reputed a great disgrace to speak a dishonest word to a married woman. They entertain foreign merchants kindly, both in their houses, and with best advice for their affairs; but they are not over fond of the soldiers and guards of the Grand Khan, because by them deprived of their natural lords and kings. About the lake are very fair buildings, and great palaces of the principal men, and temples of their idols, with monasteries of many monks. In the midst of the lake are two islands, upon each of which is a palace with incredible numbers of rooms, whither they resort upon occasion of marriages, or other feasts, where provisions of vessels, linen, and other things are maintained in common for such purposes, one hundred sometimes accommodated at once in several rooms. In the lake also are boats and barges for pleasure, adorned with fair seats and tables, and other provisions for a banquet, covered above, and flat, upon which men stand with poles to push the boat on, the lake being but shallow. Within they are painted, without are windows to open and shut at pleasure; nor can anything in the world seem more pleasant than

in this lake, to have such various objects, the city so fully presenting itself to the eye, with so many temples, monasteries, palaces, gardens with high trees, and on the water barges and people; for their custom is to work one part of the day, and to spend some part in this diversion with their friends, or with women on the lake, or else in chariots, riding through the city, which is also another of the Quinsay pleasures; for all the streets are paved with stone, as also are all the highways in the province of Mangi only for the foot; posts are left on the side a space unpaved. The principal street of Quinsay is paved ten paces on each hand, and in the midst it is full of gravel, with passages for the water, which keep it always clean.

In this street are innumerable long close chariots accommodated with cloths and cushions of silk for six persons, who divert themselves in the street, or go to the gardens, and there pass the time in bowers, fine walks, etc., which are kept for that purpose, and return at night in the same chariots. When a child is born, the father sets down the exact point of time, and with that note goes to the astrologer to consult of his future fortunes; of these astrologers are a great number in every market-place. These people will not celebrate a marriage without such consultation. When one dies that is of note, the kindred clothe themselves in canvas, and so both men and women accompany him to the burying-place, playing on instruments, and singing all the way prayers to their idols, and being come to that place, cast into the fire many papers of cotton, whereon are painted slaves, horses, camels, stuffs

of gold, and silk, and moneys, which they think he shall really possess in another world, and make a grand concert of music, in conceit of the joy wherewith the idols there receive his soul, where he beginneth, as they fancy, to live anew. In every street are towers of stone, to which, when in danger of fire, they used to carry their gods, their timber houses being very subject to such casualties. The Khan hath ordered that on the most of the bridges, day and night, there stand under a covert ten soldiers, five by day and five by night, and every guard-room is a tabernacle of wood, with a great bason, whereby they know the hours of the day and night, which at every hour's end the warders strike, to signify what hour, one, two, etc., beginning at the sun-rising; and then again at the beginning of the night. They walk up and down, and if any have a light or fire after the appointed time, they cause him to answer it before the justices or governors aforesaid, or if any walk later.

If any be not able to work, they carry him to some hospital, of which are exceeding many, founded by the old kings with great revenues through the city; when they are well again, they are compelled to work. If a fire happen, those from divers places come to and quench it, and to carry the goods to the islands, or those towers; for in the night none of the citizens dare go out but those who are in danger. The Khan always keeps here a body of his best and most faithful soldiery, as being the best and richest place in the world. Within a mile of each other are built ramparts of wood, where the same precautions are used

for like purposes. When the Khan had reduced all Mangi to his obedience, he divided it, being before but one kingdom, into nine parts, and set them a vice-king over each, who there administers justice. Every year they give account to the Khan's officers of the revenues, and other accidents, and every third year are changed, as all other officers are. One of these deputy kings is resident at Quinsay, who is governor of above one hundred and forty cities, all rich and great; nor let this be esteemed a wonder, seeing in Mangi there are twelve thousand cities, all inhabited by rich and industrious people, in every one of which the Khan maintaineth a garrison, proportionable to the greatness and occasions, one thousand, ten, or twenty thousand, not all Tartars, but Cathayans; for the Tartars are horsemen, and keep in such places as may be fit to exercise their horses. Into Cathay he sends those of Mangi, and Cathayans hither, such as are fit for arms, of which he makes choice every third year, and sends them for four or five years together into places twenty days' journey from their own country, and then suffers them to return home, a fresh body succeeding; and most part of the Khan's revenues are this way expended, and if any city rebel, he suddenly, from the next garrison, composes an army to reduce or destroy them. The city of Quinsay hath in constant garrison thirty thousand soldiers, and that which hath least hath one thousand regular troops, horse and foot in garrison.

I come next to speak of the palace of King Fanfur. His predecessors caused to be enclosed a place of ten miles circuit, with high walls, and divided it into three

parts. That in the midst was entered by one gate on the one side, and on the other were great and large galleries, the roof sustained by pillars, painted and wrought in pure gold and fine azure. These were smaller at the entry, and the further the greater, the fairest at the end; the roof richly adorned with gold, and on the walls were painted the stories of the former kings, done very elegantly. Every year, on certain idol holidays, Fanfur keeps his court and feasts his principal lords, the great merchants, and rich artificers of Quinsay. Ten thousand are at a time under these terraces. This feasting endured ten or twelve days with incredible magnificence, every guest endeavouring to present himself in greatest pomp. Behind this marble building was a wall, which divided the palace, in which were, as it were, a cloister with pillars, sustaining the terrace round about the cloister, wherein were chambers for the king and queen, curiously wrought. From this cloister was an entrance into a gallery six paces wide, extending in length to the lake, all covered. On each side of this gallery were ten courts, answering to each other like cloisters, each court having fifty chambers, with their gardens, and in them one thousand concubines abode, which the king kept for his service, who, sometimes with the queen, sometimes with them, went on his royal barge on the lake for recreation, or to visit his idol temples. The other two parts of the seraglio were divided into groves, lakes, and gardens, planted with trees, in which were enclosed all sorts of beasts, roebucks, stags, hares, conies, and there the king diverted himself with

his damsels in chariots or on horseback, no man entering there. There the ladies hunted with his dogs, and when weary they went into those groves, which answered one another over the lake, and there leaving their garments, came forth naked, and fell to swimming in the king's presence. Sometimes he would eat a banquet in those groves, being served by those damsels, without once thinking of arms, which sweet meat cost him the sour sauce ye have heard. All this was told me by a rich old merchant of Quinsay while I was there, one who had been familiar with King Fanfur, and knew all his life, and had seen that palace flourishing, into which he would needs bring me.

The viceroy now resides there, and the first galleries remain as they were, but the damsels' chambers are ruined. The walls also which encompassed the woods and gardens are fallen to the ground, the beasts and trees being gone, and all the other ornaments destroyed. Twenty-five miles from Quinsay is the ocean, between the east and north-east, near which is a city called Gampu, an excellent port, where arrive the Indian ships with merchandise. While Marco Polo was in Quinsay, account being given to the Grand Khan of the revenues, and the number of inhabitants, he hath seen that there have been enrolled one hundred and sixty toman of fires, reckoning for a fire the family dwelling in one house; every toman contains ten thousand, which makes sixteen hundred thousand families, of all which there is but one church of Christians, and those Nestorians. Every householder is bound to have written over his door the

names of his whole household, males and females; also the number of horses, the names added or blotted out as the family increaseth or decreaseth; and this is observed in all the cities of Mangi and Cathay. Those also that keep inns write in a book the names of their guests, and the day and hour of their departure, which books they send daily to the lords or magistrates, who preside at the market-places. In Mangi, the poor which are not able to bring up their children sell them to the rich. The revenues which accrue to the Khan from Quinsay, and the other cities pertaining thereto, being the ninth part of the kingdom of Mangi, are first of salt, every year, eight tomans of gold; every toman is eighty thousand sazzis of gold, and every sazzi is more than one florin of gold, which will amount to six millions and four hundred thousand ducats. The cause is, that that province being nigh the sea, there are many lakes where the water in summer is coagulated into salt, wherewith five other kingdoms in that country are served. There is plenty of sugar growing, which pay, as likewise all spices do, three parts, and a third in the hundred: the like of rice-wine. Also those twelve companies, which we said had twelve thousand shops, and the merchants which bring goods hither, or carry any hence by sea, pay the same price. They which come from remote countries and regions, as, for example, from the Indies, pay ten per cent. Likewise all things there breeding, as beasts, and growing out of the earth, and silk, pay tithe to the king, and the computation being made in the presence of Master Marco, besides salt before-mentioned, yearly

amounts to two hundred and ten toman, which will be sixteen millions eight hundred thousand ducats in gold.

A day's journey from Quinsay to the south-east, are all the way houses, villages, fair gardens, and plenty of victuals; at the end whereof is Tapinzu, a fine city in the jurisdiction of Quinsay. Three days thence, south-east, is Uguiu, and two days farther you may still ride that way, finding castles, cities, and well-cultivated places in such a neighbourhood that they seem to travellers all one city, and are all in the jurisdiction of Quinsay; there are great canes fifteen paces long and four palms thick. Two days' journey farther is the city Congui, fair and large; and travelling farther south-east are places full of people and trades; and in this part of Mangi are no sheep. but beavers, buffaloes, goats, and swine in great plenty. At the end of four days' journey farther is the city Zengian, built on a hill in the midst of a river, which dividing into two branches, encompasses it, and then runs one to the south-east, the other to the north-west. This city is in the jurisdiction of Quinsay, and its inhabitants are merchants also and idolaters; this country abounds with all sorts of game. Three days' journey from thence, through a most pleasant country, exceedingly well inhabited, stands Gieza, a great city, which is the last of the Quinsay kingdom; after which you enter into another kingdom of Mangi, called Concha; the principal city thereof is called Fugiu, by which you travel six days' journey south-east, through hills and dales, always finding places inhabited, and plenty of game, of beasts and fowl; they are idolaters,

merchants subject to the Khan. There are stout lions, and here grow ginger and galingale in great plenty, with other sorts of spices; eight pounds of ginger are sold for a Venetian groat. There is a herb whose fruit hath the effect, and gives the colour and smell of saffron, but is not saffron, which is used in their meats. They commonly eat man's flesh, if the persons die not of sickness, as better tasted than others. When they go into the field they shave to the ears, and paint their faces with azure: they serve on foot, except the captain, who rides, and uses a sword and lance; they are very cruel, and when they kill an enemy presently drink his blood, and afterwards eat his flesh.

After six days' journey is Quelinfu, a great city, with three bridges, each eight paces broad, and above a hundred long: the women fair and delicately shaped. They have abundance of silk and cotton, are great merchants, have plenty of ginger and galingale. I was told, but saw them not, that they have hens without feathers, hairy like cats, which yet lay eggs, and are good to eat. Here are many lions, which make the way very dangerous. After three days' journey you arrive in a populous country, inhabited by idolaters, who make abundance of silk manufactures; the chief city is Unguem, where is great plenty of sugar, sent thence to Cambalu, which they knew not how to make good till they became subject to the Khan, in whose court were Babylonians, which taught them to refine it with ashes of certain trees, they only boiling it before into a black paste. Fifteen miles farther lies Cangiu, still in the realm of Concha, and

here the Khan keeps an army in readiness for a guard of the country. Through this city passes a river a mile broad, fairly built on both sides, and abounding with ships carrying sugar and other lading. This river disembogues from hence five days' journey south-east at Zaitum, a seaport, from which the rich ships of India come to this pleasant city, as is all the country betwixt, in which are trees and shrubs of camphire. Zaitum is a famous port, where all the ships arrive with merchandise, thence dispersed through all India. There is here such a quantity of pepper, that what comes by Alexandria to the west is little to it, and, as it were, one of a hundred. The concourse of merchants is incredible, it being one of the most commodious ports in the world, exceeding profitable to the Khan, who receives custom at the rate of ten in the hundred of all merchandise. They pay so much for hire of ships also, that there is not above one half of their merchandise remaining entire to themselves, and yet that moiety yields vast profit to them. The citizens are idolatrous, given to pleasure: in it are many artificers on embroidered and arras work. The river is great, very wide and swift, and one arm of it runs to Quinsay, at the parting of which is Tringui situated, where porcelain dishes are made. I was told of a certain earth, which they cast up in hills, and so let lie exposed to all weathers for thirty or forty years without stirring; after which refining by time, they make dishes, paint them, and then put them in the furnace. You may there have eight dishes for one Venetian groat. In this kingdom of Concha, the

Khan has as great a revenue almost as that of the kingdom of Quinsay. In these two Master Marco was, and in none of the other nine kingdoms of Mangi, in all which one language is used, with variety of dialect, and but one sort of writing; and therefore we will speak no more of them, but in the next book discourse of India the Greater, the Middle, and the Less, in which he was both in the service of the Khan, and also in his return with the Queen to Argon.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE ISLAND OF ZIPANGRI, AND OF THE ATTEMPT
MADE BY THE TARTARS TO CONQUER IT, AND
THEIR MISCARRIAGE IN THEM.

WE will now enter into the affairs of India, and begin with their ships, which are made of fir with one deck, on which are twenty cabins, more or less, according to the bigness of the ships, each for one merchant. They have a good rudder, and four masts with four sails, and some two masts, which they either raise or take down at pleasure. Some greater ships have thirteen divisions on the inside, made with boards enchased, so that if by a blow of a whale, or a touch of a rock, water gets in, it can go no farther than that division, and the leak being found, is soon stopped. They are double, that is, have two courses of boards, one within the other, and are well caulked with oakum, and nailed with iron, but not pitched, for they have no pitch, but anointed with an oil of a certain tree mixed with lime and hemp, beaten small, which binds faster

than pitch or lime. The greater ships have three hundred mariners, the others two hundred, or one hundred and fifty, as they are in bigness and in burthen, from five to six thousand bags of pepper; and they were wont to be larger than now they are, the sea having broken into parts and islands, that the defect of water in some places causeth them to build less. They use also oars in these ships, four men to one oar; and the greater ships have with them two or three less ships, able to carry a thousand bags of pepper, having sixty mariners or upwards on board; which small ships serve sometimes to tow the greater. They have also with them ten small boats for fishing and other services fastened to the sides of the larger ships, and let down when they please to use them. They sheath their ships also after a year's usage, so that then they have three courses of boards, and they proceed in this manner sometimes till there be six courses, after which they break them up. Having spoken of the ships, we will speak of India, and, first, of certain islands.

Zipangu, *i.e.* Japan, is an island on the east, one thousand five hundred miles distant from the shores of Mangi, very great, the people of white complexion, of gentle behaviour, in religion idolaters, and have a king of their own. They have gold in great plenty, for few merchants come thither, and the king permits no exportation of it; and they which have carried on commerce there speak of the king's house covered with gold, as churches here with lead, gilded windows, floors of gold. There are also many pearls. Once the

fame of these riches made Cublai-Khan to send to conquer it two of his barons, with a great fleet of ships; one named Abbaca, and the other Vensansin, who, going from Zaitum and Quinsay, arrived there, but falling out between themselves, could take but one city, and there beheaded all they took, except eight persons, which by an enchanted precious stone, enclosed in the right arm between the skin and flesh, could not be wounded with iron; whereupon, with wooden clubs, at the command of the two barons, they were slain. It happened one day that a northern wind blew hard, which was dangerous to the ships riding there, so that some were lost, some put out farther to sea, and others, with the two leaders and a few principal persons, returned home. Out of many broken ships some escaped by boards and swimming to an island not inhabited, four miles off Zipangu, and were about thirty thousand, without provision or arms, against whom the Zipanguaners, after the tempest was calmed, sent out a fleet of ships, and an army. These coming on land to seek the wrecked Tartars without order, gave occasion to the Tartars to wheel about, the island being high in the midst, and to get unseen to their ships, which were left unmanned, with the streamers displayed, and in them they sailed to the chief city of Zipangu, where they were admitted without suspicion, and found few others but women. The King of Zipangu besieged them six months, and they, having no relief, yielded themselves, and their lives were saved. This happened A.D. 1264.

The Khan, for the ill-conduct of his two commanders,

cut off the head of one, and sent the other to a desert island called Zerga, where he caused offenders to die by sewing them, their hands bound in a new flayed hide of a buffalo, which drying, shrinketh so as it puts them to vast tortures, which lead to a miserable death. The idols in this and the adjoining islands are made with heads of kine, swine, dogs, and in other fashions more monstrous, as with faces on their shoulders, with four, ten, or even a hundred hands; and to these they ascribe most power, and do most reverence, and say, that so they learned of their progenitors. They sometimes eat their enemies which they take with great joy, and for great dainties; at least, so it is reported of them. The sea, in which this island lies, is called the sea of Cin, or Chin, that is, the sea against Mangi, and in the language of that island Mangi is called Chin or Chint, which sea is so large, that the mariners and expert pilots, who frequent it, say that there are seven thousand four hundred and forty islands therein, the most part of them inhabited; that there grows no tree which yields not a good smell, and that there grow many spices of divers kinds, especially lignum aloes, and pepper black and white. The ships of Zaitum are a year in their voyage, for they go in winter and return in summer, having winds of two sorts, which keep their seasons, and this country is far from India; but I will leave them, for I never was there, nor are they subject to the Khan, and return to Zaitum; from hence, sailing south-westward one thousand five hundred miles, passing a gulf called Cheinan, which continues two months sailing to the northward, still confining

on the south-east of Mangi, and elsewhere with Ania and Toloman and other provinces before named. Within it are infinite islands all in a manner inhabited : in them is found abundance of gold, and they trade one with another.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LARGE ACCOUNT OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES, PROVINCES, CITIES, AND ISLANDS IN THE EAST INDIES.

THIS gulf seems like another world; and after one thousand and five hundred miles, sailing across this gulf, is the country Ziambar, rich and great, having a king and a language of their own, idolaters, and paying tribute to the Grand Khan of twenty elephants, and lignum aloes in great quantities yearly. A.D. 1268, the Khan hearing of the riches of this island, sent thither Sagatu with an army to invade it. Acambate, the king thereof, was old, and made his composition by paying the tribute, which has been mentioned. There are many woods of black ebony there, which are of infinite value. Sailing thence betwixt the south and south-east one thousand five hundred miles is Java, at present supposed by mariners the greatest island in the world, being above three thousand miles in circuit, under a king who payeth tribute to none, the Khan not offering to subject it, because of the length and danger of the voyage. The merchants of Zaitum and Mangi fetch thence abundance of gold and spices. South and south-westward six hundred miles from Java are two islands, one Sondur, which is the greater, the other Condur, less, both desolate.

Fifty miles south-east from them is a province, or firm land, very rich and great, named Lochae, the people idolaters, having a language of their own, as well as a king. There grows brazil wood in great plenty, much gold, elephants, wild beasts, and fowl, a fruit called Bercias, large as lemons, very good; the place is mountainous and savage, and the king permits not any one to come thither, lest they should know his country and attempt to conquer it. There are abundance of porcelain shells for money transported to other places. Five hundred miles southward from Lochae is the isle Pentan, a savage place, which produceth in all the woods sweet trees; sixty miles in the way the sea is in many places but four fathom, after which, sailing to the south-east thirty miles further, is the island and kingdom of Malaiur, which hath a peculiar king and language to itself, and here a great trade is carried on in spices from Pentan. One hundred miles south-east is Java the Less, in compass about two thousand miles, and hath in it eight kingdoms, and the people have many languages; they are idolaters, have abundance of treasure, spices, ebony, and brazil, and are so far to the south, that the north star cannot there be seen. Master Marco was in six of those kingdoms, of which he gives the following account, leaving the other two which he saw not.

One of these eight kingdoms is Felech, where the idolaters, by frequent trade with Saracens, are converted to the law of Mohammed. In the cities the mountaineers are very beastly, eating man's flesh and all kinds of impure food, and worship all day what

they first see in the morning; next to that is Basma, which hath a language by itself; they live without law like beasts, and sometimes send hawks to the Khan, who lays claim to all the island. For savage beasts they have wild elephants, and unicorns much less than elephants, like the buffalo in hair, their feet are like elephant's feet, they have one horn in the midst of the forehead, and hurt none therewith, but with the tongue and knee; for on their tongue are certain long prickles, and sharp, and when they hurt any they trample on him, and press him down with their knees, and then tear him to pieces with their tongue. The head is like a wild boar's, which he carries downwards to the ground. They love to stand in the mire, and are filthy beasts, and not such unicorns are said to be in our parts, which suffer themselves to be taken by maids, but quite contrary. They have many apes, and of several kinds; they have goshawks black as ravens, great and good for prey. There are certain small apes, in their faces like men, which they put in boxes, and preserve with spices, and sell them to merchants, who carry them through the world, showing them for pigmies, or little men.

Samare is the next kingdom, where Master Marco stayed five months against his will, forced by ill weather. There none of the stars of Charles's Wain are seen. He once went on shore with two thousand people, and there fortified for those five months, for fear of those brutish men-eaters, and traded meanwhile with them for victuals. They have excellent fish, wine of the date-tree, very wholesome for phthisis, dropsy,

and diseases of the spleen; some white, some red, and Indian nuts as big as a man's head, the middle whereof is full of a pleasant liquor better than wine; they eat of all sorts of flesh without any difference. Dragoian is another of these kingdoms claimed by the Khan, having a king and language of their own. I was told of an abominable custom, that when one is sick, they send to inquire of the sorcerers whether he shall escape? If the devils answer no, the kindred send for some whose office it is to strangle the sick party; after which they cut him in pieces, and the kindred eat him with great jollity, even to the marrow of the bones; for, say they, if any substance of him should remain, worms would breed thereof, which would want food, and so die, to the great torture of the soul of the deceased. The bones they afterwards take and carry into some caves in the hills, that no beast may touch them. If they take any stranger, they eat him in the same manner.

Lambrai is the fifth kingdom of Java, in which is great plenty of brazil, of the seeds whereof Master Marco brought to Venice, and sowed them, but in vain, the soil being too cold. They have unicorns in great abundance, and choice of beasts and fowls. Fanfur, the sixth kingdom, hath the best camphire, which is sold weight for weight with gold. In that province they make meal out of great and long trees, as thick as two men can fathom; whence, paring off the thin bark and wood about three fingers thick, the pith within is meal, which they put in water, and stir it very well, the lightest dross swimming, and the

finest settling to the bottom, and then the water being cast away they make paste, of which Master Marco brought some to Venice, tasting not much unlike barley-bread. The wood of this tree thrown into the water sinks like iron, of which they make lancets, but short; for if long they would be too heavy to bear. These they sharpen, and burn at the tops, with which so prepared they will pierce through armour sooner than if they were made of iron. About one hundred and fifty miles from Lambrai, sailing northwards, are two islands, one called Nocueran, in which the inhabitants live like beasts, go all naked, both men and women, and worship idols, have excellent trees, cloves, sanders white and red, Indian nuts, brazil, and other spices; the other Angaman, savage as the former, and where I was told they had dogs' heads and teeth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE GREAT ISLAND OF CEYLON, OF THE KINGDOM OF MALABAR, AND THE STATE OF OTHER COUNTRIES VISITED BY THE AUTHOR.

SAILING hence one thousand miles to the west, and a little to the north-west, is Zeilan, two thousand and four hundred miles in circuit, and anciently three thousand and six hundred miles, as is seen in the maps of the mariners of those places; but the north winds have made a great part of it sea. It is the finest island in the world; the king is called Sendernaz. The men and women are idolaters, go naked, save that they cover their privities with a cloth; have no corn, but

rice and oil of Sesamino, milk, flesh, wine of trees, abundance of brazil, the best rubies in the world—sapphires, topazes, amethysts, and other gems; the king is said to have the very finest ruby that was ever seen, as long as one's hand, and as big as a man's arm, without spot, shining like a fire, not to be bought for money. Cublai-Khan sent and offered the value of a city for it; but the king answered he would not give it for the treasure of the world, nor part with it, because it had been his ancestors. The men are unfit for soldiers, and hire others when they have occasion. From Zeilan, sailing sixty miles to the west, lies the great province of Malabar, which is not an island, but firm continent, called India the Greater, the richest province in the world; there are in it four kings, the chief of which is Sinder Candi, in whose kingdom they fish for pearls, viz., betwixt Malabar and Zeilan, in a bay where the sea is not above ten or twelve fathom; in which divers descend, and in bags or nets tied to their bodies bring up the oysters, in which are the pearls; and because there are some great fish which kill the fishermen, they hire certain Brahmins to charm them, and these have the twentieth, and the king the tenth. These oysters are found through the whole month of April, and till the middle of May, and not at any time else. In September they find them in a place above three hundred miles off, and till the midst of October. The Khan goes as naked as the rest, save that he wears some honourable ensigns, as a collar of precious stones about his neck, and a thread of silk to his breast, with one hundred and four fair pearls strung

thereon to count his prayers by, of which he must daily say so many to his idols. A sort of bracelets he weareth on three places on his arms, and likewise on his legs, on his fingers, and on his toes. The prayers which he says are *Pacauca, Pacauca, Pacauca*, one hundred and four times. This king hath one thousand concubines, and if any please him he takes her, as once he did from his brother, whence wars had followed; but the mother threatening to cut off her breasts, which had nourished them, if they proceeded, the quarrel was composed. He hath many horsemen for his guard, which always accompany him, who, when the king dies, throw themselves voluntarily into the fire when he is burnt, to do him service in the next world.

This prince and his brethren, the kings of Malabar, buy their horses from Ormus and other parts; the country breeds none, and if it sometimes falls out that it does, yet are they there bred ill-favoured and naught. Condemned persons will offer themselves to die in honour of such an idol, which is performed with twelve knives, and twelve wounds in divers parts of the body, at every blow saying, "I kill myself in honour of that idol;" and the last he thrusts in his heart, and is then burnt by his kindred. The wives also cast themselves into the fire with their husbands, disrepute following those who refuse it. They worship idols, and most of them adore cows, and would not eat so holy flesh as beef for all the world. There are some called *Gau*, who eat such oxen as die of themselves, but may not kill them, and daub over their houses with ox-dung. These *Gau* are of the posterity of those

which slew St. Thomas, and cannot enter the place where his body is. They sit on carpets on the ground in this kingdom: they have no corn but rice; are not a martial people; kill no beasts, but when they will eat any, get the Saracens to do it, or other people; wash twice a-day, morning and evening, both men and women, and will not otherwise eat, which they who observe not are accounted heretics. They touch not their meat with their left hand, but use that hand only to wipe, and for other unclean uses. They drink each in his own pot, and will not touch another man's pot, nor suffer their own to touch their mouth, but hold it over, and pour it in. To strangers who have no pot they pour drink into his hands, and oblige him to drink with them. Justice is severely administered for crimes, and a creditor may in some cases encompass his debtor with a circle, which he dares not pass till he hath paid the debt or given security; if he does, he is to be put to death: and Master Marco once saw the king himself on horseback thus encircled by a merchant, whom he had long delayed and put off: neither would the king go out of the circle which the merchant had drawn till he had satisfied him, the people applauding the king's justice. They are very scrupulous of drinking wine made of the grape, and they which do it are not thought worthy or honest men, or admitted to be witnesses, a thing denied also to him who sails by sea, for they say such men are desperate. They think lechery no sin. It is very hot, and they have no rain but in June, July, and August, without which refreshing of the air they could not live. They have many

physiognomers and soothsayers, which observe beasts and birds, and have an unlucky hour every day in the week called Choiach, as on Monday, betwixt two and three, on Tuesday the third hour, and on Wednesday the ninth, etc., through all the year, set down in their books. They curiously observe nativities. At thirteen years old they put their boys to get their own livings, who run up and down to buy and sell, having a small stock given them to begin, and in pearl season they buy a few pearls, and sell them again to the merchants, which cannot well endure the sun, for little gain; what they get they bring to their mothers to dress for them, for they may not eat at their father's cost. They have idols, male and female, to whom they offer their daughters, who, when the monks or priests appoint, sing and dance to the idols, and very often set victuals before them, saying that they eat, leaving it the space of a meal, singing all the while, and then they fall to eating in earnest, after which they return home. The cause of these sacrifices is the household quarrels betwixt the god and goddess, which, if they should appease, they should lose their blessing. The great men have litters made of large canes, which they fasten artificially to some upper place to prevent tarantulas biting, and also fleas and other vermin, and for fresh air.

The place of St. Thomas's sepulchre is a small city, not much frequented by merchants, but very much by Christians and Saracens for devotion. The Saracens hold him a great prophet, and call him Ananias, that is, a holy man. The Christians take of the earth where he was slain, which is red, and carry it with them with

great reverence, and give it, mixed with water, to the sick. A.D. 1288, a great prince, having more rice than room to lay it in, made bold with St. Thomas's church, in the room where pilgrims were received ; but, by a vision of St. Thomas in the night, was so terrified that he quickly left the place. The inhabitants are black, not so born, but became so by often anointing themselves with jessamine oil, to obtain that beauty. They paint the devil white, and their idols black. The cow-worshippers carry with them to battle some of the hair of a wild ox, as a preservation against dangers, and therefore such hairs are sold at a high price.

CHAPTER XXV.

OF THE KINGDOM OF MURFILI, THE DIAMOND MINES THERE, AND OTHER COUNTRIES ADJACENT.

MURFILI, or Monsul, is northward from Malabar five hundred miles; the inhabitants are idolaters. They have diamonds in their hills, which they search for after great rains. Westward from St. Thomas is Lac, whence the Brahmins have their original, who are the honestest merchants in the world, and will not lie for anything, and faithfully keep anything committed to their custody, or as brokers sell or barter merchandise for others. They are known by a cotton thread, which they wear over the shoulders, tied under the arm crossing the breast. They have but one wife, are great astrologers, of great abstinence, and long life ; observe their own shadow in the sun, when they are to buy, and thence conjecture according to the rules of their art.

They constantly chew a certain herb, which makes their teeth good, and helps digestion. There are some religious among them called Tanguai, who go altogether naked, live austere, worship cows, of which they have little brass images on their foreheads, and of the ox-bones ashes make an ointment, wherewith they anoint their bodies in divers places with great reverence. They neither kill or eat any live creature, nor herb green, or root before it is dried, esteeming everything to have a soul. They use no dishes, but lay their victuals on dry leaves of apples of paradise. They ease themselves in the sands, and then disperse it hither and thither, lest it should breed worms, which must die for want of food. Some of them live to one hundred and fifty years, and their bodies, after death, are burnt.

In Zeilan I had forgot to mention a high mountain, which none can ascend but by iron chains, as I was told, in the top whereof the Saracens say is Adam's sepulchre; the idolaters say it is the body of Sogoman Barchan, the first idol founder, son to the king of that island, who betook himself to a solitary life on the top of this hill, from whence no pleasures nor persuasions could draw him; his father made an image after his death to represent him, all of gold, adorned with garments, and commanded all the islanders to worship it; and hence, as they say, began idolatry. Hither they come from remote places in pilgrimage, and there his fore-teeth, and a dish of his, are reserved, and as holy relics solemnly showed. The Saracens say they are of Adam, which report caused the Khan, A.D. 1281, to send ambassadors thither, who obtained two teeth and

a dish, and some of his hairs, by grant, from the King of Zeilan, which he caused to be received by the whole people of Cambalu without the city, and brought to his presence with great honour.

Cael is a great city, governed by Aster, one of the four brethren, who is very rich, also very kind to merchants; he hath three hundred concubines. All the people have a custom to be continually chewing in their mouths a leaf called tembul, with spices and lime. Coulam is five hundred miles south-west from Malabar; they are idolaters. There are also Christians and Jews, who have a speech by themselves. They have pepper, brazil, indigo, lions all black, parrots of divers sorts, all white as snow, others azure, others red, and some small peacocks and peahens, very different from ours, and larger, as are their fruits; they are lecherous, and marry their sisters and near kindred: there are many astrologers and physicians. In Camari are apes so large, that they seem to be men: and here we had a sight of the north-star. Delai hath a king, and the inhabitants have their own language: the people are idolaters, and have plenty of spices; the ships of Mangi come thither. Malabar is a kingdom in the west, in which, and in Guzerat, are many pirates, who sometimes put to sea with above a hundred sail, and rob merchants. They bring with them their wives and children, and there remain all summer. In Guzerat is abundance of cotton, the trees six fathoms high, and last twenty years; the cotton of these trees is not fit to spin after they are above twelve years old, but for quilts: there are many rhinoceroses. In Canhau is

stores of frankincense. It is a great city, where is great trade for horses. In Cambaia is much indigo, buckram, and cotton. Semenath is a kingdom of a peculiar language; they are idolaters, merchants, and a good people. Resmacoran is a great kingdom of idolaters and Saracens. The last province of the Greater India, towards the north-west, is five hundred miles, near which are said to be two islands, one of men and the other of women, those coming to these, and there stay in March, April, and May. The women keep their sons till twelve years, and then send them to their fathers. It seems the air of that country admits of no other course: they are Christians, and have their bishop, subject to the bishop of Socotora; they are good fishermen, and have store of amber. Socotora hath an archbishop, not subject to the Pope, but to one Zatuli, who resides at Baldach, who chooseth him. The Socotorans are enchanters, as great as any in the world, though excommunicated therefore by their prelate, and raise winds to bring back such ships as have wronged them till they obtain satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR, THE COUNTRY OF
ETHIOPIA, AND OTHER PARTS OF AFRICA.

A THOUSAND miles thence southward is Magaster, one of the greatest and richest isles in the world, three thousand miles in circuit, inhabited by Saracens, governed by four old men; the people live by merchandise, and sell vast quantities of elephants' teeth.

The currents in these parts are of exceeding force. They report strange stories of fowls called Ruch, like an eagle, but of incomparable bigness. Zensibar also is said to be of great length, etc. There are elephants, giraffes, and sheep, very unlike to ours; the men and women very deformed. I have heard mariners and skilful pilots of those parts report, and have seen in their writings, which have compassed the sea of India, that there are in it twelve thousand and seven hundred islands inhabited and desert. In India Major, which is from Malabar to Chesmacoran, are thirteen kingdoms.

India Minor is from Ziambi to Murfili, in which are eight kingdoms, besides many islands. The second, or Middle India, is called Abascia, the chief king a Christian. There are six other kings, three Christians and three Saracens, subject to him; there are also Jews. St. Thomas having preached in Nubia, came to Abascia, and there did the like, and went afterwards to Malabar. They are very valiant soldiers, always in arms against the Soldan of Aden and the people of Nubia. I heard that, A.D. 1288, the great Emperor of the Abissines would have visited Jerusalem, but being dissuaded by reason of the Saracen kingdoms in the way, he sent a bishop of holy life to perform his devotions, who in his return was taken by the Soldan of Aden, and circumcised by force; whereupon the Abissine monarch raised an army, discomfited the Soldan, with two other Mohammedan kings, and took and spoiled Aden. Abascia is rich in gold; Escier is subject to Aden, forty miles distant south-east, where is plenty of white frankincense, very good, which drops

from small trees by incision of the bark, a rich merchandise, etc. Some in that country, for want of corn, make biscuit of fish, of which they have great plenty; they also feed their beasts with fish. They take them in March, April, and May.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF THE PROVINCE OF ADEN, AND OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES REPUTED TO BE INACCESSIBLE.

AFTER having spoken of the provinces on the coast, I will now return to some provinces more to the north, where many Tartars dwell, which have a king called Caidu, of the race of Zingis-Khan, but subject to none. These observe the customs of their ancestors, dwell not in cities, castles, or fortresses, but dwell with their king in the fields, plains, valleys, and forests, and are esteemed true Tartars. They have no sort of corn, but live on flesh and milk in great peace. They have multitudes of horses, kine, sheep, and other beasts. There are found great white bears, twenty palms long, black foxes, very large, wild asses, and little beasts called Rondes, which bear the sable furs and variarcolini, and those which are called Pharaoh's rats, which the Tartars are skilful in taking. The great lakes, which are frozen, except for a few months in the year, are the cause that in the summer it is scarce to be travelled for mire, and therefore the merchants, in going to buy their furs for fourteen days' journey through the desert, have set up for each day a house of wood, where they barter with the inhabitants, and in

winter they use sledges without wheels, and plain on the bottom, rising with a semicircle at the top, or end, which are drawn on the ice by beasts like great dogs, by couples, the sledge-man only with his merchant and furs sitting therein.

At the extremity of the region of these Tartars is a country reaching to the farthest north, called the obscure land, because the most part of the winter months the sun appears not, and the air is thick and darkish as betimes in the morning with us. The men there are pale and squat, have no prince, and live like beasts. The Tartars often rob them of their cattle in those dark months, and, lest they should lose their way, they ride on mares which have colts sucking, which they leave with a guard at the entrance of that country, where the light beginneth to fail, and when they have taken their prey, give reins to the mares, which hasten to their colts. In their long-continued summer, they take many of the finest furs (on occasion of the Tartars going to rob them), of which I have heard some are brought into Russia. Russia is a great country near that northern darkness. The people are Greek Christians, the men and women fair, and pay tribute to the King of the Tartars of the west, on whom they border. On the east there is plenty of furs, wax, and mines of silver; it reaches, as I was told, to the ocean sea, in which are islands that abound in ger-falcons and falcons.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

MANY OBSCURE PASSAGES IN THIS PERFORMANCE
EXPLAINED.

WE are now arrived at the close of this author's writings, and therefore are more capable of judging of the particulars they contain, which was the reason that I left some points to be considered here, which I should otherwise have thrown under the head of objections. Some critical readers have affected to doubt whether our author, or rather his performance, deserves credit, from the account that is given of the manner in which it was wrote, and from the different stories that we have told of the original. We have already accounted for the mistakes that have been made on this head, and shall here only take notice that Francis Pipin, of the order of preachers, who made a Latin translation of our author's work, tells us in his preface that, from the report of his domestics, he was satisfied that Marco Polo was a man of great prudence, remarkably honest, and one who had the fairest character that could be. It is not very easy to conceive that such a man should expose that credit which he had been at so much pains to establish, by sending into the world an indigested heap of fictions and romances. But the same person informs us farther that Signior Nicolo Polo, the father of our author, was the most esteemed and best beloved man of his time, and that he constantly reported the very same facts during his whole life which his son published in his works; and as for his uncle, Signior Maffio, who enjoyed some of the principal offices in the

government at Venice, and distinguished himself by his wisdom and integrity, when he was upon his death-bed he took particular care to assure his confessor that he had reviewed his nephew's work, and that he was fully satisfied that there was nothing in it that was not strictly true, and this he gave him leave to declare for the satisfaction of the world. Here, then, are three credible witnesses to the same facts, and therefore, according to all the laws of evidence, they ought to be looked upon as thoroughly established.

We must, however, distinguish between such facts as our author reports from his own knowledge, and those which are grounded only on hearsay and information. We may accuse an author of credulity or imprudence who inserts strange and improbable things in his writings, but we cannot with justice charge him with infidelity or falsehood on that head, and we ought also to make some allowance for the genius of the time in which he wrote, because it cannot be presumed that even the wisest and most prudent men can be totally free from the errors of the age in which he flourished ; it may not be amiss to give a few instances with regard to our author.

In the twenty-fifth chapter there is an account of diamond mines, in the kingdom of Murfil, where we have omitted a passage that is to be met with in most of the editions of our author, because it is reported on the credit of the inhabitants, and we were willing to examine it by itself, that the reader might perceive we had no intention to impose upon him those improbabilities which had been imposed upon our author himself.

After having told us that diamonds are found there at the bottom of the rocky mountains, after the rainy season is over, he proceeds thus: "They also in the summer time ascend these mountains, though with great difficulty, because of the vehemence of the heat, and find abundance of those precious stones among the gravel. In this they are likewise much exposed to danger from the vast number of serpents of enormous size, which shelter themselves in the holes and caverns of these rocks, where, nevertheless, they find diamonds in the greatest abundance. Among other methods of obtaining them they make use of this: there are abundance of white eagles that rest in the upper part of those rocks, for the sake of feeding on the serpents, and in the deep valleys and precipices, where men are afraid to venture themselves, they throw pieces of raw meat, which the eagles perceiving, immediately stoop and seize it, with all the little stones and gravel that adhere to these moist pieces of meat. Such as search for diamonds watch the eagles' nests, and when they leave them pick up such little stones, and search likewise for diamonds among the eagles' dung. The kings and great men in this country keep the fairest and finest of these stones to themselves, and suffer the merchants to sell the rest."

The famous Julius Cæsar Scaliger was extremely offended with this relation, which he treats with the utmost contempt, and seems to wonder at the assurance of a writer that expects stories of this kind should gain credit; yet, after all, I do not see that there is any great harm in our author's relating this tale, how-

ever improbable it may seem, since without doubt he received it from the inhabitants, and what motives they had to tell him such a story is not very difficult to guess. The native Indians, in all the revolutions that have happened in the countries where they live, have preserved this trade in their own hands, and by fables of one sort or other kept strangers from attempting to interfere with them. Our author was very probably the first European that was ever at the diamond mines, and therefore we have the less reason to be surprised at his being imposed upon in an affair of which he could not be a competent judge.

But to make the reader some amends for so imperfect a relation of the manner in which this valuable trade is carried on, I shall take this opportunity of inserting the best account of the matter that I believe has been hitherto given, by one who was an eye-witness of it in the year 1680, and that too in the very country known to our author by the name of the kingdom of Murfili. "The diamonds are so scattered and dispersed in the earth, and lie so thin, that in the most plentiful mines it is rare to find one in digging, or till they have prepared the stuff, and searched purposely for them. They are also frequently enclosed in clods; and some of those of Molwilleed, and the new mines in the kingdom of Golconda, have the earth so fixed about them, that, till they grind them on a rough stone with sand, they cannot move it sufficiently to discover they are transparent, or were it not for their shapes to know them from other stones. At the first opening of the mine, the unskilful labourers sometimes, to try

what they have found, lay them on a great stone, and striking them one with another, to their costly experience discover they have broken a diamond. One I know who had an excellent stone of eight mangellans, that is, thirty-two grains, served so by ignorant miners he employed. Near the place where they dig they raise a wall, with such rugged stones as they find at hand, whereof all the mines afford plenty, of about two feet high, and six feet over, flooring it well with the same; for the laying of which they have no other mortar than the earth tempered with water. To strengthen and make it tight, they throw up a bank against the side of it, in one part whereof they leave a small vent about two inches from the bottom, by which it empties itself into a little pit made in the earth to receive small stones, if by chance any should run through. The vent being stopped, they fill the cistern they have made with water, soaking therein as much of the earth they dig out of the mine as it can conveniently receive at a time, breaking the clods, picking out the great stones, and stirring it with shovels till the water is all muddy, the gravelly stuff falling to the bottom; then they open the vent, letting out the foul water, and supply it with clean, till all the earthy substance be washed away, and none but a gravelly one remains at the bottom. Thus they continue washing till about ten of the clock before noon, when they take the gravelly stuff they have washed, and spread it on a place made plain and smooth for that purpose near the cistern, which being so dried by the heat of the sun at that time of the day, they very

curiously look it over, that the smallest bit of a stone can hardly escape them. They never examine the stuff they have washed, but between the hours of ten and three, lest any cloud, by interposing, intercept the brisk beams of the sun, which they hold very necessary to assist them in their search, the diamonds constantly reflecting them when they shine on them, rendering themselves thereby the more conspicuous.

“Some of the expertest labourers are employed in searching, he that sets them at work usually sitting by and over-looking; but it is hardly possible, especially where many are employed, to watch them so narrowly but that they may steal part of what they find, as many times some of them do, and, selling it privately, convert it to their own use. If they find a large stone, they carry it not presently to their employer, but keep on looking, having an eye on him, till they observe he takes notice of it, when, with the turn of their hand they give him a glimpse of it, but deliver it not till they have done work, and then very privately, it being the general endeavour to conceal what they find, lest it should come to the knowledge of the governor of the place and he requires a share, which in the kingdom of Golconda is usually practised, without any respect to the agreement made with them. The miners, those that employ them, and the merchants that buy stones of them, are usually pagans; not a Mussulman, that ever I heard of, followed the employment. These labourers and their employers are Tellingas, commonly natives of or near the place. The merchants are the Banians of Guzerat, who for some generations

have forsaken their own country to take up this trade, in which they have had such success, that it is now solely engrossed by them, who, corresponding with their countrymen in Surat, Goa, Golconda, Visiapore, Agra, and Dilu, and other places in India, furnish them all with diamonds.

“The governors of the mines are also idolaters. In the King of Golconda’s dominions a Tellinga Brammee rents most of them, whose agreement with the adventurer is, that all the stones found under a pagoda weight are to be their own; all of that weight and above is to be his, for the king’s use. But although this agreement be signed and sealed, he minds not at all the performance thereof, but endeavours to engross all the profit to himself, by tyrannically squeezing both merchants and miners, whom he not only taxes very high, but maintaineth spies among them of their own people. On the least suspicion that they have been any ways fortunate, he immediately makes a demand on them, and raises their tax; else on a false pretence they have found a great stone, drubs them, till they surrender what they have to redeem their bodies from torture.

“Besides, the excise is so high on all sorts of provisions, beetel, and tobacco, which with them are esteemed necessities, that the price of all things is doubled; by which course there is hardly a man to be found worth five hundred pounds amongst them, most of them dealing by moneys taken up at interest of usurers, who reside there purposely to furnish them, who with the governor eat up their gains, so that one

would wonder any of them should stay, and not betake themselves to places where they might have better usage, as there are many in other governments, and some few that have the sense to remove; but many their debts, others hopes of a great hit, detains. Both merchant and miner go generally naked, only 'a poor cloth about their middle, and their sash on their heads; they dare not wear a coat, lest the governor should say they have thriven much, and are rich, and so enlarge his demands on them. The wisest, when they find a great stone, conceal it till they have an opportunity, and then with wife and children run all away into the Visiapore country, where they are secure. The government in the Visiapore country is better; their agreements observed, taxes easier, and no such impositions on provisions. The merchants go handsomely clad, among whom are several persons of considerable estates, which they are permitted to enjoy peaceably, by reason whereof their mines are much more populous, and better employed than those of Golconda."

It is for the same reason that I have omitted another improbable story of a bird called a *ruc*, of such a monstrous size as to be able to carry an elephant into the air; which absurdities our author was probably induced to believe, by the strange things he daily saw in these parts of the world, and of which the people in Europe had not so much as the least idea. These omissions I thought requisite for keeping the work within bounds, as having no inclination to try the patience of my readers, by inserting any more of these old travels than seem absolutely necessary for con-

necting the several parts of this discourse, and showing how, in what manner, and by whom those great discoveries were made, which enabled the different nations in Europe to carry on so great a trade as they do to all parts of the East Indies. This, without doubt, was originally owing to this work of Marco Polo, who, though no geographer or seaman himself, yet left such clear and evident proofs of the possibility of reaching the most distant parts of Asia by sea, that his work was more esteemed in Portugal, where the first spirit of discovery appeared, than in Italy itself. It remains, in this place, to give a short account of the names by which he has distinguished the countries he visited, and particularly to answer the great objection raised against his work, from his not making any mention of the famous wall in China for keeping out the Tartars, which shall be done in as few words as possible.

Our author following exactly the sentiments of the Tartars, distinguishes all this great country into two parts, viz., Cathay and Mangi, about which many doubts have been raised, and many disputes set on foot without any just grounds, since it is very plain that, under the denomination of Cathay, Marco Polo comprehends the six northern provinces of China, and under that of Mangi the nine southern provinces, which are separated from the former by the great river Kiang; and when we come hereafter to treat of the present state of the empire of China, we shall take occasion to show that this description of his agrees very well with the best accounts of that empire. This will be the more intelligible to the reader, when he is

informed that the Tartars still preserve these very forms of speech, that is to say, give the name of Cathay to the northern parts, and that of Mangi to the southern provinces of China. As to this latter, it is a name of contempt, for Mangi, in the Tartar tongue, implies barbarians, and so they esteemed the Chinese to be, not from the brutality of their manners, but from their extravagant haughtiness and pride, and especially from that intolerable hatred and contempt with which they treated the Tartars themselves. The plain reason why our author did not mention the famous wall in China was, because he entered it by the southern provinces; and as he confines himself to the places he saw, or to such as were in their neighbourhood, and prosecutes his description from the western parts of China to the sea, it was impossible he should take notice of it; so that when we consider this matter attentively, it is very plain that this circumstance, instead of lessening the credit of Marco Polo, ought, in truth, to strengthen it very much, since it is a convincing proof of the truth of what he has asserted in relation to his own travels, and his descriptions of the countries through which he passed; and evidently shows he did not amuse himself with accounts of countries and provinces of which he could say nothing but from report, to which, if he had listened, his relation must have been much more obscure and perplexed than we find it at present. But it is now time to proceed to the conclusion of this section, by showing the advantages that may be obtained by the perusal of Marco Polo's Travels, in order to the thorough understanding of our subject. And this we

shall perform as concisely as possible, and in such a manner as may disengage us from the necessity of looking into any more of these old writers for the future.

CHAPTER XXIX.

REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS.

As the inhabitants of Europe received the first distinct account of the vast country of China from our industrious Venetians, so from them likewise they had the clearest and best account of the revolutions that had happened in that empire by the power of the Tartars; a thing of such consequence to the right understanding what subsequent travellers have related, that I will be bold to say all the difficulties and discouragements that have been thrown in our way, and have so long hindered our making a right use of the many collections of travels already published, have arisen in part from a humour that for some time prevailed of treating Marco Polo's relation as a romance, and partly through the mistakes made by those, who for want of having sufficient lights, and the materials that were requisite, undertook to explain the history of the irruptions of the Tartars into China, and endeavoured to make the dates and facts mentioned in these travels fall in with their accounts, accusing, at every turn, the author of errors and faults, of which themselves only were guilty. To remedy these disorders, and to make the way plainer for the future, we shall, without running into a long discussion of what other writers have advanced,

observe, that there have been three distinct conquests of China made by the Tartars, of each of which we shall give a clear and distinct account in very few words. The first of these was by the Eastern Tartars, who, before the time of Zingis-Khan, made themselves masters of the northern provinces of China, and fixed the seat of their empire at Khanbalick, Cambalu, or Pekin; and this, as I conceive, gave rise to what is called the empire of Cathay; concerning which all our ancient writers in general deliver themselves with so much confusion, sometimes representing Cathay as a part of Tartary, sometimes again comprehending under that name the whole empire of China; and at others distinguishing it from both. But from this distinction it clearly appears that though the ancient empire of Cathay was situated in China, yet it was an empire raised by the Tartars; and that from want of attending to this, so many mistakes have been introduced.

The prince who governed Cathay in the time of Zingis-Khan was Altan-Khan, against whom that great conqueror made his first attempt, in the year 1206, and that with such success as to oblige this monarch, after various defeats, to shut himself up in the city of Cambalu, and to sue for a peace, which, with much difficulty, he obtained; for the confirmation of which he gave his daughter in marriage to Zingis-Khan. This peace was of but very short continuance; for Altan-Khan, having a jealousy that some of his nobility held intelligence with his enemy, he put many of them to death; and finding the northern parts of his do-

minions in a manner wasted and depopulated by the late invasion, he retired to the city of Nankin, which his father had fortified with three walls, the last of which was forty leagues in circuit, and left his son in possession of Khanbalick and of the adjacent countries. The rest of the nobility, enraged at the instances of severity before mentioned, and at the same time doubting their own safety, had immediate recourse to Zingis-Khan, and drew him a second time into Cathay, where he made himself master of the imperial city of Cambalu; the news of which accident affected Altan-Khan to such a degree, that he poisoned himself. This happened about the year 1210; and thus the Tartars became masters of the northern parts of China. They continued their conquests under the reign of the successors of Zingis-Khan, till the emperor who reigned when our author was in these parts, viz., Coplai-Khan, who in the year 1278 completed the conquest of Mangi, or the southern parts of China.

The bounds of Zingis-Khan's conquests on this side was the river Hoang; but his successors annexed all the country between that river and the river of Kiang. All the rest were subdued by Coplai-Khan, and his general Pe Yen. This was the second conquest made by the Tartars, who not only destroyed the empire formerly established by their countrymen in Cathay, but also that of the native Chinese, which had subsisted for so many ages. This short recapitulation sets this affair in its true light, and not only explains what Marco Polo has told us, and reconciles his accounts with those of later authors, but also connects his

relation with that of Rubruquis, and even those of the Arabian travellers; so that taking the whole together, we have a clear and satisfactory view of the affairs of China, to that which I call the second conquest by the Tartars; but as the affairs of this country were entirely changed again before the arrival of the Portuguese by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, I think it will be for the reader's ease and advantage to have this history conducted to its close before we enter upon the discoveries and conquests of the Portuguese; because otherwise, when we come to speak of the Chinese as again in the possession of their country, and again driven out and conquered by the Tartars, it must necessarily introduce infinite confusion. It is from the Chinese writers that we have the reigns of the Tartar emperors who succeeded Coplai-Khan, and of whom there is very little mention made in the histories of the Tartars.

The Chinese, as I before observed, called this new imperial family Yuen, and bestowed the name of Chi-Tsou upon Coplai-Khan, of whom their histories speak with the utmost reverence, and whom they celebrate, for his having opened the great canal mentioned by our author, and which has been ever since justly considered as one of the wonders of China. It is three hundred leagues in length, and nine thousand imperial barks are constantly employed thereon, in transporting the tributes of the southern provinces to Cambalu or Pekin, and in other services. These writers place the death of this emperor somewhat lower than the Tartar historians; for the former

say that he lived to the age of fourscore, and died A.D. 1295, whereas the latter place that event in 1292. He was succeeded in the empire by his grandson, whom our author calls Timur, but in the Chinese chronicles he is styled Tching-Tsong; and as his grandfather excelled in power, so he distinguished himself by his clemency and the love of his subjects. After him reigned seven other princes of his family, all whom were no less illustrious on the score of their personal virtues than glorious from their possessing so large an empire; and it is very remarkable that the Chinese history renders so great justice to this foreign race of princes, as to style the period in which they ruled over China the "Wise Administration." The last of them was Chun-ti, a prince of great natural endowments, but who unfortunately gave himself up to priests and women, leaving the management of the affairs of the empire entirely to his prime minister. The Tartar soldiers, through so long a peace, had lost the original discipline, and were become slothful and effeminate, which so raised the courage of the Chinese, that they began to show a disposition to revolt; and one Tchou, an obscure person who had been no better than a footman, having put himself at the head of a body of malcontents, reduced many of the great cities in the empire; and became, by degrees, so powerful, that he twice defeated the imperial army, and at last forced the Tartars to abandon China, after they had been possessed of it ninety-nine years. This revolution happened in 1370; and Tchou, having by his success in this war raised

himself to the imperial throne, assumed the name of Tai-Tsou, and fixed his imperial residence in the city of Nankin. And thus it was that the Chinese, having expelled their conquerors, recovered the dominion of their own country.

As for the Emperor Chun-ti, he retired with his Tartar subjects northwards, and died of grief and vexation about two years after this revolution happened. The Tartars that were thus expelled, having a strong tincture of the Chinese customs, did not join with the rest of the Moguls, but settled themselves in the country of Leaoton, and were, from this time forward, styled the Nieuchen Moguls, or "Moguls of the East," to distinguish them from the other Moguls, who were called "Moguls of the West."

This desert country they cultivated with the utmost care, built therein several considerable cities, and practised that industry which they had learned by conversing so long with the Chinese; yet, in some respects, they still retained a tincture of their ancient manners; for, instead of remaining firm and united, which seemed to be the only means left for recovering again the dominions they had lost, they split themselves into several little principalities, under so many Khans; who, though their territories were not very wide, maintained nevertheless their independency. Among the most considerable of those cities which they erected were Kirin, Ula, and Kinkrita, all three of them seated on the west bank of the river Sangoro, which falls into the great river Amur, about twelve days' journey above its mouth. The city of Kirin is

distant from the province of Leaoton, about three hundred and sixty miles. The city of Ula is in latitude forty-four degrees twenty minutes north, and was considered as the capital of the Nieuchen Moguls. The Khan of Ula however, was far from being a considerable prince, had no sort of superiority over the rest of the Khans of the Eastern Tartars, was without allies or resources beyond the power of his own subjects; and yet, as we shall show hereafter, it was this Khan Ula that had the courage to undertake, and the good fortune to accomplish, the third conquest of China: but at present we will leave the Tartars cultivating their deserts, and return to the new-founded empire of Tchou and his descendants.

The dynasty, founded by this prince, was called Ming, and the emperor, who, as I have said before, assumed the name of Tai Tsou, reigned thirty-one years with great glory, and left the empire to his grandson, who perished in a civil war, and was succeeded by his uncle, who, having been formerly King of Pekin, transferred the seat of the empire thither. The sixth emperor of this family was Yng Tsong, under whose reign the Tartars made new incursions into China; to oppose them, the emperor marched at the head of a great army, and pursuing them considerably beyond the famous wall, they suddenly faced about, attacked and defeated the Chinese, making the emperor prisoner. His son, who was but two years old, was advanced to the empire, and the brother of the captive emperor, whose name was King Ti, declared protector, which promotion

gave him an opportunity of seizing the empire. The Tartars, some time after, released Yng Tsong, who chose, however, to lead a private life, and leave his brother in possession of the empire, which he enjoyed to his death; and then the old emperor was again seated on the throne.

The eleventh emperor of this race was Chi Tsong, who had the good fortune to defeat the Tartars in several battles; and it was under his reign that the famous Francis Xavier preached the Christian religion in the East, where he died in 1552. The emperor Chi Tsong reigned forty-five years, in the latter part of which the government began to decline very sensibly, as it continued to do under all his successors, down to Hoai Tsong, who was the sixteenth and last emperor of the family of Ming. It was under his reign that Zungt-hy, who was Khan of Ula, formed the design of making himself master of China, notwithstanding that all the force he was able to raise did not exceed fifteen thousand horse. He began with entering into private intrigues with some of the Chinese mandarins, who were exiled into the province of Leaoton, by whose assistance he soon became master of great part of that province. The emperor sent against him an army more than sufficient to have forced him back into his own country; but he had so much address as to prevent the principal officers of this army from doing their duty; so that by degrees he mastered all the rest of that province, and at last took possession of its capital.

While this scene was transacted in the east, and the whole force of the Chinese empire employed there to

so little purpose, new troubles arose in the western provinces, where several bands of thieves and highwaymen committed the most extravagant outrages; and at last, under the command of one Lycoungz, an obscure and infamous fellow, plundered several cities, and even whole provinces, which, increasing the number of their forces, the rebel had at last sufficient power to attempt the subversion of the empire. It was with this view that he marched directly to Peking, where in three days he became master of the place; and the emperor, finding himself abandoned, hanged himself on a tree in his garden. Lycoungz immediately took the title of emperor, and endeavoured, by all the methods he could devise, to bring over to his interest Ou-san-guei, who was general of the army sent against the Tartars, and the only person capable of disputing with him the possession of China. That general, however, rejected all his offers with contempt, which obliged Lycoungz to take the field once again, and to march against him with his numerous army: Ou-san-guei, who saw that it was simply impossible for him to think of making head at once against the usurper and the Tartars, resolved to make terms with the fairer enemy of the two, and thereupon invited Zungt-hy to come to his assistance.

This was precisely what the Tartar prince desired, and therefore he made no difficulty of complying with his demand. He left five thousand of his own troops in the province of Leaoton, and then marched with ten thousand Tartars and twenty thousand of the inhabitants of that country to the relief of the Chinese general, who received him with great joy. They marched

together directly towards the usurper, and when they were upon the point of giving him battle, Zungt-hy observed, in a conference he had with the Chinese general, that as the best part of the forces of the empire, and especially those of the southern and western provinces were extremely afraid of the Tartars, it would be very expedient for him to cut the tails of his horses after their manner, by which means the army of the usurper would take them all for Tartars. Ou-san-guei, following the advice of the Khan, it had so good an effect, that the rebels were totally defeated, and Lycoungz obliged to fly with the remainder of his army towards Peking. The victorious allies continued their pursuit without the least intermission; and on their drawing near the city, the Chinese general made proclamation that all such as did not take part with the usurper should trim their horses after the manner of the Tartars, that they might the more easily distinguish them on all occasions. This stratagem had as great an effect as a second victory: such multitudes declared themselves against the usurper, that, finding it absolutely impossible to maintain his ground, he first plundered the imperial city, and then retired with his army loaded with booty. When the allies were in possession of Peking, it was agreed that Zungt-hy with his forces should remain there for the security of the place, and that Ou-san-guei with his army should pursue the usurper till such time as an end could be put to the war.

The same arts, or rather the same virtues, by which the Tartar Prince had gained the affections of the

people of Leaoton produced the like consequences amongst the inhabitants of Pekin; and as, on the one hand, they were weary of living without the support and protection of a governor, so they flattered themselves, on the other, with enjoying all imaginable happiness under a prince of so much humanity and so great abilities as Zungt-hy, and therefore almost of their own accord they declared him emperor in the absence of the Chinese general, who had himself views upon the throne, in which he had very probably succeeded if he had not been thus outwitted by the Tartar Zungt-hy, who foreseeing how difficult a thing it might prove for him to maintain himself in possession of so great an empire, with such a handful of forces, was no sooner seated on the imperial throne than he instantly despatched advice of his good fortune to the Khans of East Tartary, who were princes of his own family, inviting them to come and share with him in so rich a conquest. This was certainly a good expedient for securing himself against the fickleness or infidelity of the Chinese; but at the same time it visibly exposed the new emperor to the danger of being undone by his auxiliaries; for the Khans of the Tartars, who on the first summons hastened to his assistance, had certainly in view the dividing the Chinese empire amongst them; but Zungt-hy was a prince of such wisdom and penetration, that he immediately discovered the danger to which he stood exposed, and provided against it with a sagacity equal to its penetration. He divided these corps of Tartars as soon as they entered his dominions, sent for several of their princes to Pekin, and in a short

time so separated them from each other, that they became absolutely his subjects, and were unable to act otherwise than was conducive to his service. In the conquest and settlement of China, this Tartar prince showed all the courage and capacity of Julius, all the policy and conduct of Augustus Cæsar, by which he thoroughly accomplished the third conquest of China by the Tartars, which happened in one thousand six hundred forty and four, after the Chinese had preserved their freedom for two hundred and sixty-six years.

This new race of Tartar princes, which still continue to reign in China, for the twenty-second dynasty of their monarchs, is distinguished by the name of Tsing ; it is, however, very remarkable that Zungt-hy is not accounted the first of those emperors, because he died almost as soon as he was seated on his throne, and before he was entirely possessed of China, leaving the empire to his son Chun-Tchi, who was then no more than six years old, and to whom his dying father assigned his brother Ama-Van for his guardian. So early a minority, one would have imagined, must have been fatal to the new-raised empire ; but Ama-Van, during the non-age of his nephew, conducted all things with so much wisdom and fidelity, that when the young emperor came to take the reins of government into his own hands, he found himself in as full possession of his dominions as if they had descended to him from a long line of ancestors. The Emperor Chun-Tchi was himself a person of extraordinary abilities, easy and affable amongst his soldiers, wise and prudent in his councils, and so refined a politician, that, under colour of exe-

cutting the laws with exactness, he took off all the great men in China that were capable of giving him either jealousy or disturbance, so that after a reign of seventeen years, he left the empire perfectly settled to his son, who was but eight years old.

The name of this prince was Cang-hi ; he was raised to the throne in the year 1662, and during his minority the empire was governed by four great ministers, who executed their offices with the greatest wisdom and integrity, so that this second minority proved not in the least dangerous to the empire. It is true that the famous Chinese general Ou-san-guei took the advantage of it, and endeavoured to shake off the yoke of the Tartars, of whom with equal wit and wisdom he said, that he had called in lions to assist him in hunting dogs. He had some success at the beginning, and might probably have secured at least some part of the empire for himself and his posterity if he had not been very old at the time of his revolt, and died not long after, which gave the emperor's ministers an opportunity of taking such measures as put it out of the power of the Chinese to rebel for the future. Cang-hi fell nothing short, either of his father or his grandfather, so that it may be reckoned an extraordinary felicity in this family, that for three generations there were as great princes of it as perhaps of any other in the world. This emperor was extremely careful with regard to two points, the encouraging and distinguishing his Tartar subjects, and behaving with the utmost justice and moderation towards the Chinese.

In the beginning of his reign, indeed, he committed

some necessary acts of severity, but when he found that he had by this means absolutely broken the mutinous spirit of the people of China, he changed his conduct entirely, and applied himself wholly to the putting everything in the best order possible, for the benefit of all his subjects. It was with this view that he obliged the viceroys and other governors of provinces to administer justice with impartiality and mildness, taking from them the power of punishing capitally, and obliging them to send all such sentences to the supreme tribunal of the empire. In order to take away all distinctions, and to render his Tartar and Chinese subjects but one people, he established this regulation: he obliged the Tartars to wear the Chinese habit, and obliged the Chinese to cut their hair, after the mode of the Tartars, and this upon pain of death. It may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that many refused to comply with this order, and chose rather to part with their lives than their hair, and that many more abandoned their native country, to fly into places where they might wear their hair as long as they were wont. But the emperor's edict had notwithstanding the desired effect, that is to say, freed him from such mutinous spirits as might have disturbed the tranquillity of his reign.

The most important employments, and the most honourable offices in the government, he gave only to the Tartars; but then he made a law, by which the children of Tartars by Chinese women, or of Chinese by Tartarian women, who were bred up in the customs, and were taught to speak the language of the Tartars,

were declared capable of the highest offices in the empire. He was not more careful of the domestic than of the foreign affairs of his empire, which almost all his predecessors had neglected to a great degree; for he not only reduced all the eastern Tartars entirely under his obedience, but made two journeys into that country where he admitted all ranks of people freely to his presence, and thereby gained the love of the Moguls in the highest degree. As for the Tartars of the west, he forced them to have recourse to his protection, and not only drove the Calmucks from his frontiers, but entering their country also in his turn, took from them the provinces of Chamil and Tarfan, which serve as an excellent barrier on that side of the Chinese empire.

In his person, and in his manners, he had nothing of the Tartar, and was so perfectly acquainted with every government in Europe, that he discoursed of them in a manner that surprised even the Europeans themselves. The late Czar Peter the First sent M. d'Ismailoff with the character of his ambassador to the Chinese Court, whom the emperor not only received with all imaginable politeness, but at the first audience presented his excellency, a nobleman who accompanied him, and his secretary, each with a gold cup full of mead, by which they plainly perceived that he was informed of the Czar's custom, who when he had a mind to distinguish any foreigner, was wont to present him with a glass of wine with his own hand. This Emperor Cang-hi reigned with great glory sixty-one years, and died on the 20th of December, 1722. He left behind him

seventeen sons, the fourth of whom he declared his successor, who at his accession to the imperial dignity, assumed the name of Yong-Tching, *i.e.*, peace undisturbed. This prince, who is said to inherit the virtues as well as dominions of his ancestors, was in quiet possession of the empire in the year 1735, since which we have not had any certain, or at least very important, accounts from China.

By this deduction of the Chinese history we learn a multitude of things necessary for the understanding such of the subsequent voyages as mention that country, which was the reason that I insisted upon it so long; and we likewise discover the usefulness of this sort of knowledge with respect to the voyages that have gone before. We see that the Chinese, with whom our Arabian travellers conversed, were quite another sort of people than those that now inhabit China; for they were a pure and unmixed nation, whereas the modern Chinese are in a great measure incorporated with the Tartars; from whence it is easy to discern that great alterations must have happened in their manners, especially if we consider the character that Rubruquis gives the Tartars, which comes much nearer that of the modern Chinese than anything we meet with in the Arabian writers. It appears likewise from the comparison of the facts related by the Arabians with those mentioned by Marco Polo of the people of Mangi, that both these writers must have reported things with great fidelity, since they agree in a multitude of particulars. The conquest of the northern part of China by the Tartars, though not expressly mentioned, yet is plainly

alluded to by the second Arab writer; and as to the entire conquest of China by the same nation, we owe the full account of it to Marco Polo; for, without the assistance of his relations, it would have been a thing very difficult, if not impossible, to have discovered that Chi-Tsou was the same with Coplai-Khan, or Cublai-Khan, Emperor of the Tartars, who before he became master of their country was called by the Chinese Ho-pi-lie.

We likewise learn from this succinct view of the Chinese history that the Tartars, who now possess China, are the very same nation that formerly possessed it, contrary to what some very learned men asserted, and which was generally believed half an age ago. We likewise see that the reigning family in China are direct descendants of Cublai-Khan, and consequently of Zingis-Khan, that famous conqueror whose empire, as we have elsewhere shown, was the most extensive that has been hitherto known in the world. These things are of very great consequence, if we read voyages for the sake of improving and enlarging our knowledge, and not merely for the sake of amusement, which, however, is rather increased than lessened by attending to these circumstances. We can easily apprehend, after a little reflection, that in the time of our Arabian travellers, and even in that of Marco Polo, the Chinese empire must have been in a much better condition, and its trade much more flourishing, than when it was first visited by the Portuguese, English, and Dutch. Before that time it had not been exposed to those cruel ravages that ensued first on the breaking

out of their civil wars, and next from the last conquest by the Tartars. Besides, we can at any time have recourse to this short history when we are at a loss as to the facts mentioned in subsequent voyages, and by comparing the times in which they happened with the dates that are therein set down, obtain an easy solution of doubts that perhaps we could never otherwise have got over.

It is from the consideration of these advantages, and that as far as in my power lies I might remove all obstacles whatsoever to the perfect understanding of this subject, that I have determined to give the reader in the next section a concise history of the other Tartar empire in the Indies, I mean that of the Great Mogul, who was likewise a descendant from the same family with the great conqueror I have so often mentioned. By pursuing this method, which I have brought into the narrowest compass possible, the reader will gain such a previous knowledge of a great number of facts as never to be at a loss in perusing any of the voyages to the East Indies, either in this, or in any other collection, which, without such an introduction, it would have been absolutely impracticable for him to have understood, and that for many reasons, of which I will take the liberty to mention only a few. In the first place then, every voyage brings us not only into a new country, but, if I may so speak, introduces us into a new company, with the character of which, if we have not some previous acquaintance, it is impossible for us to be at our ease, whereas if we know in general who and what they are, we enter immediately into the true sense

of the relation, and hear all that is told us with pleasure. In the next place, it often happens that either from the fear of appearing tedious, or from some other motive, the writers of voyages give us only short hints as to the government of the countries through which they pass, or the characters of princes that reign in them, which would be utterly unintelligible to such as never heard of them before, and yet may be sufficient for the information of those who have a general notion of the posture of things in that country at the time mentioned by the author. Lastly, we are by these means enabled to rectify the mistakes of such writers to distinguish between the truth and falsehood of what they relate, and to form a clear and certain judgment of the merit of their performances.

It may possibly be objected, that for the same reasons which have been offered in support of these two histories of the Chinese and of the Indian empires, we might be obliged to write the history of all the other princes that have reigned in the Upper Asia, which objection, however, is not at all founded in fact, since in the first place the histories of all the little princes in India are very far from being so necessary as those of the capital empires; and in the next, how necessary soever we might think them, it is impossible for us to write any such histories, because the necessary materials for them are not to be found. When, therefore, this matter is seriously considered, it appears to be a new argument in favour of our design; for, since there have been but two great empires in this part of the world, of which any just and regular account can be

given, and to which all books of voyages and travels through the East Indies must necessarily refer, it would seem very absurd and unreasonable, after all the pains we have taken in the darker ages of this history, to decline that period of it which is at once the most useful, and will appear by far the most agreeable, to a modern reader, as there is not in the compass of universal history any branch so full of extraordinary events, or in which there occur more surprising turns and revolutions, than in that which we are about to give.

Add to all this, that however deficient the rest of the oriental histories may be, we have abundant materials for this, and those too as excellent in the kind as can be desired; for besides the particular relations afforded us by several writers of credit, who were actually on the spot when those events happened which they record, we have very great lights given us by such of the oriental writers as have undertaken to explain the several expeditions of the Tartars, and especially those of the famous Timur-Bec, known to us by the name of Tamerlane, whose conquests, though less extensive, have, notwithstanding, made a greater figure in our general histories than those of his glorious predecessor Zingis-Khan. Besides all which, we have the singular advantage of having a great part of this history taken from the very records of that empire which it concerns, by the industry of Mr. Manouchi, who was forty years in that country, in the quality of physician to its emperors, and had thereby an opportunity of having free recourse to those records, which for the benefit of posterity, as well as his own information, he transcribed.

